No. 310 (New Series), Vol. 6. February 26, 1938

The PASSING SHOW

2D.

★ L. PATRICK GREENE
Sir. P. CHALMERS MITCHELL
GEORGE MANNING SANDERS
LESLIE BERESFORD
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LARS MOËN

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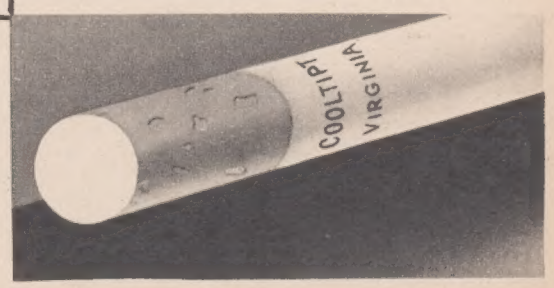

"Film Weekly's" Amazing GIFT PRESENTATION

THIS SUPERB CHROMIUM-PLATED CLOCK for YOU!

This illustration is enlarged to show more clearly the delightful moulded ultra-modern design. The actual height of the clock is 3¾ in. and its base measures 4¼ in. wide.

HERE'S 1938's MOST THRILLING NEWS . . . Something NEW . . . excitingly DIFFERENT . . . a wonderful privilege opportunity for every reader of "The Passing Show." This week, "FILM WEEKLY," the beautiful, all-photogravure National Guide to Films, announces as a PRESENTATION to EVERY NEW READER a SUPERB 1938 CHROMIUM-PLATED CLOCK. This, indeed, is an amazing Presentation, a grand surprise opportunity of unparalleled generosity which you must seize AT ONCE. Post the Reservation Forms below TO-DAY.

This magnificent Clock is built and finished in a style found only in the most expensive timepieces. It has an all-over gleaming surface of **Heavy Plate—untarnishable CHROMIUM** on its elegant streamlined face and base and **high quality NICKEL-PLATING** on its modern one-piece dust-proof casing. Its weight alone—nearly ¾ lb.—indicates its superb solid construction. Its distinctive two-tone silvered metal dial is clearly marked with modern numerals and it is fitted with the very latest type precision hands. The clock is set at a convenient, all-vision angle, beautifully mounted on a broad solid chromium-plated base.

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Applicants may commence with the token "F.W.8," which appears in the bottom right-hand corner of the inside back cover of the issue NOW ON SALE, or they may start with any subsequent "F.W." Series Token. When completed you send your Voucher with the 16 Tokens and the nominal remittance as shown above. Your Clock will be then sent by post to your home.

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IMPORTANT.—It is a condition of this scheme that your newsagent MUST hold a written order from you for the regular supply of "Film Weekly." Hand him the Form below TO-DAY.

B "FILM WEEKLY"

3d. Every Friday

ORDER FORM

To.....
(Name of Newsagent)

Address.....

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Please deliver or reserve "Film Weekly" for me weekly until further notice.

Signature.....

Address.....

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Date.....

PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY

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P.S., 26.2.38

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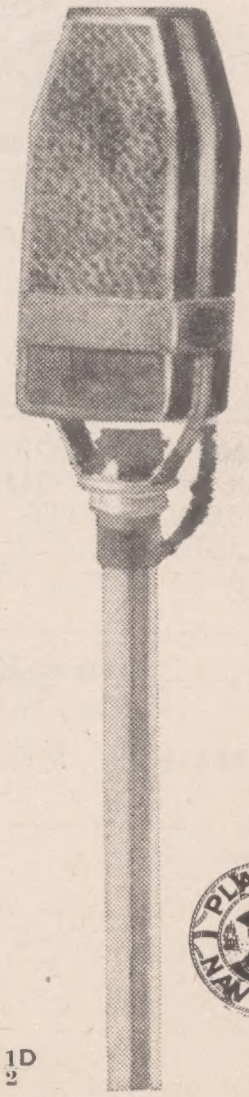

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT

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N.C.C.419A

The PASSING SHOW
No.310. Vol.6. FEBRUARY 26, 1938

They saw the brave youngster who had dared much for *his* country leap up into the air and then fall into a huddled heap. They saw him stagger to his feet and then drop again

THE PACIFISTER

John Hobden, peaceful son of the soil, takes a long shot to save the old country, even though he is a very strict pacifist

BY L. PATRICK GREENE

ILLUSTRATED BY JACK M. FAULKS

JOHN HOBDEN sprawled flat on his back and stared contentedly into the blue sky which was flecked with white, gossamer clouds and washed by yesterday's showers.

He was a big man, stolid and, apparently, utterly lacking in imagination and wit. His shapeless clothing added to his rustic appearance; the trousers were tied just below the knees with pieces of coarse twine; his coat—it was of antique pattern and cut—was patched at the elbows. And where a gun butt would rest, with soft leather. His grey, collarless shirt was open at the front, disclosing a wide expanse of his powerful, hairy chest.

The air was warm and scented with the life of early summer. The gorse and hawthorn bushes which dressed the gentle slopes of the Downs were in full blossom and the coconut-suggestive smell of the yellow blooms, mingling with the scent of the hawthorn had a soporific effect on the big man. He sighed, stretched himself with an almost feline grace and seemed to snuggle yet closer to the good Sussex earth.

On the ground sheet, spread at his side, was a service rifle. Its condition would have melted the crankiest of sergeant majors to a purring approval. Occasionally John Hobden's big right hand closed on the stock of his rifle, or his fingers patted it almost caressingly. It was typical of the man that he should lie on the ground, risking what dampness it might hold, but he would not expose his rifle to that same chance.

Close to his hand, in the shade of a gorse bush, was a bottle of beer and a carpenter's rush basket, containing his mid-day meal.

The air buzzed with the activity of bees; skylarks soared high overhead as if suspended upon the silver thread of their optimistic song; a cuckoo constantly reiterated its monotonous call, and gulls, winging inland from the Channel to follow some ploughman's earthy labours, brought a silvery grey hint of the storms which could trouble a placid sea.

John Hobden, to whom all this was as a book, fondly read and re-read, found the thrill of change in its very constancy and loved it all.

For a little while sleep hid his vividly blue eyes and he slept as easily and as silently as any creature of the wild. His awakening was equally easy; it was accompanied by no protesting grunts and stretchings; there was no need for him to rub his eyes to wakefulness.

He sat up and saw a man climbing up the Down towards him, taking a path which meandered haphazardly amongst the gorse and hawthorn. His erect carriage was that of a soldier; his well-worn —and well worn—tweeds gave him a gentle ease and dignity; his face was weather-beaten and a close-cropped, iron-grey moustache shaded his firm yet generous mouth.

John Hobden's smile expressed the affectionate

(*please turn over*)

regard he had for his old colonel and present squire.

He turned his head a little and saw another man coming down the hill; a big, clean shaven, fat-jowled man dressed in loud-checked plus fours. This man ignored the path and took a straight, ruthless course to his objective. And again John Hobden smiled—but this time the smile was expressive of the amused contempt the sight of Sir Harry Peer—who owned the estate adjoining Colonel Foster's—always aroused in him.

Hobden opened the basket and phlegmatically spread out his lunch on the ground sheet.

It was not a "workman's lunch." But then, Hobden was not a workman and his wife had been the Squire's cook; naturally she had the ability—as well as the will, for she was devotedly loyal to her husband—to prepare an appetising meal. She had done that.

First Hobden unfolded a snowy white napkin which he spread for a cloth. On it he arranged gleaming silver, spotless china and the food his wife had put up for him. There were crisp rolls and pats of butter. A salad of lusciously-red tomatoes, crisp lettuce and celery; a whole bird—a cock pheasant judging from the gay plumage which adorned it—a small, deep-dish apple pie, a pot of cream, cheese, a thermos flask containing coffee and an aristocratic cigar.

John Hobden's eyes gleamed as he "set the table" with an almost fastidious care.

"Martha's done it proper," he chuckled. "A meal for a king—that it be. W'y! It looks so dainty, like, that I 'ardly dares to eat it."

But his actions were bolder than his words and having dissected the bird with a surgeon's skill he commenced to eat with a healthy appetite.

He looked up with a well-feigned start of surprise as the man in plus fours came to a noisy halt just a little above him.

"Mornin', Sir Harry," he said. But his mouth was filled with food and the "Sir" was only an indistinct mumble.

"Morning," Sir Harry Peer snapped. Then: "Look here, Hobden, how many times have I told you that I won't have you trespassing on my land?"

"W'y," Hobden said slowly. "I don't know as I've kept count, Sir Harry. But it be a mort o' times. Was 'e thinkin' on tellin' me again, like?"

"Damn your confounded impertinence, man. I won't stand for it—or you. You're on my land now and I——"

"No," Hobden interrupted. "I bain't. Your line comes on the up-hill side o' this bush. An' meanin' no disrespect, Sir Harry, even if I were on your land, I bain't trespassin'."

He poured himself a glass of beer, squinted at it appraisingly and said:

"Your health, Sir Harry!"

"Why, why," the other spluttered, his face purpling with indignation. He glared angrily at Hobden and then at the food so tastefully arrayed on the ground close to his feet. "Pon my soul," he continued suspiciously, "you do yourself very well, my man."

"You're right there, Sir Harry," Hobden agreed, complacently. "I never were one for stintin' none on my victuals an Martha does put things up tasty like. But there; I were forgettin' my manners. I'd take it proud if you were to join me in a bite. Ar! An' there's one o' your very own cigars—wot your butler give me—to round it off like."

Sir Harry Peer snorted.

"And I suppose my gamekeeper gave you that pheasant?"

"No. I wouldn't hardly say that, Sir Harry. Tom Lane's a bit miserly like wi' your birds. 'E don't give any away, I can tell 'ee. W'y, 'e keeps that close a watch on 'em that 'e's on my heels iffen I even think on takin' a walk through your woods."

"Just the same, I'm willing to gamble that's one of my birds."

"It don't seem to have spoilt the taste none, even if it is, Sir Harry. Now do let me give 'ee a slice off——W'y, good-mornin', Colonel."

Hobden did not rise as Colonel Foster joined them yet, somehow, by the change of his tone and expression, he conveyed the impression that he was mentally standing rigidly at the salute and he only relaxed when the colonel said:

"Mornin', Peer. Mornin', Hobden. Carry on."

The colonel continued:

"Does himself well, doesn't he, Peer?"

"Just what I said, Foster," Sir Harry exclaimed indignantly. "And I think it's about time you helped me to send the poaching scoundrel to prison for a few weeks."

"Oh, come now, Peer. You misjudge Hobden. He doesn't have to poach, you know. He has the free run of my land—and he doesn't abuse his right."

"You're too soft and easy with him, Foster. You encourage him in his—his blatant impertinencies."

"After all," Colonel Foster said softly, "he saved my life you know."

"Yes," Sir Harry said impatiently. "I know all about that. And you saved his—so that evens things up. But what he did was no more than any soldier would have done in the line of duty. And on the strength of that, Hobden's been living on the fat of the land ever since. He's lazy, good-for-nothing, without a thought in his mind beyond poaching for the good stuff to fill his belly he's too idle to work for. There are too many like him in England——"

"There can't be too many like Hobden," Colonel Foster interrupted. "England's in their blood. Their blood is England."

"You're a sentimentalist, Foster and you let your sense of gratitude ride you too hard. Look here. I want you to come and have lunch with me—we can talk about the range then and if you can convince me that the money would be well spent, I'll double my subscription to your rifle club.

"And as for you, Hobden, my men have orders what to do with you if they catch you poaching on my land. They won't be gentle with you, I can assure you, so don't say you haven't been warned!"

"Ar," Hobden said innocently, "that reminds me: Martha were makin' my mouth water wi' describin' how she were goin' to 'jug' a hare for me next Saturday. But, as I told her, I bain't caught it yet!"

"There, Foster. Did you hear that confounded impertinence? Oh, well!" Sir Harry laughed almost good-naturedly. "I ought to know by this time that you've got a blind spot where Hobden is concerned. Come along, there's a good chap. Don't want to be late for lunch."

As he moved off down the hill Colonel Foster called:

"I'll be with you in a minute, Peer. Want to have a word with Hobden." And to Hobden he said:

"Really! I think you go out of your way to rub Sir Harry the wrong way."

"Mebbe I do, Colonel," Hobden admitted. "But 'e do rile me summat cruel."

"Perhaps he wouldn't if you tried a little harder to understand him, Hobden. He's really a first class man though, perhaps, he doesn't know us and our ways very well. But he's a big man and doing big things in the Air Ministry. England needs more men like him, Hobden."

Hobden looked like a small boy who has been caught in the act of drawing an impolite caricature of a master on the blackboard.

"Be that a fact, Colonel!" he exclaimed. "Well—do 'ee think it 'ud ease his mind iffen I told him the bird bain't none o' his rearing?"

The colonel laughed.

"I'll tell him. But I'd like to know how you knew we'd be meeting here this morning and what put it into your head to put on this show especially for Sir Harry. But, really, Hobden, I'm ashamed of you. 'Pon my soul I am. Pheasant! Out of season! For shame, Hobden!"

"Gor, Colonel!" Hobden exclaimed. "That be highly mortifying. I told Martha summat 'ud come o' her love o' dressin' thing up, but dang me if I ever thought a few gay feathers 'ud change a spring chicken to a pheasant in your eyes, Colonel."

Colonel Foster gasped as he looked a little closer at the bird.

"You really are a scoundrel, Hobden," he gasped. "But there's a moral there for you as well as for me and Sir Harry: it isn't always safe to judge on first appearances. But no: I shan't tell Sir Harry. He'd be even more—er—mortified than I am. By the way are you doing some shooting this afternoon?"

Hobden nodded.

"I've been lightening the 'pull-off' a bit, Colonel, an' I want to be sure it's alright for Saturday's match."

"Good man. Someone coming to mark for you?"

Again Hobden nodded.

"Well! Don't forget to have the flags flying."

Colonel Foster hurried after Sir Harry and Hobden continued with his meal and then, having tidily put away the debris, he lighted the cigar and smoked contentedly. From where he sat he got a view of a long narrow valley between two flanks of the Downs. At the top end, below where he sat, was a large space, as level and as green as a cricket field, bordered on three sides by yew trees. At the far end was the rifle range. The butts were backed by an ancient barrow and beyond that, closing the valley at the end, a thickly-wooded hill.

Hobden could see the colonel and Sir Harry standing at the 800 yards firing range, but as he watched they moved off and passed out of sight along a path leading through the bushes to the right of the range.

The ash on Hobden's cigar grew longer and

"And as for you, Hobden; my men have orders what to do with you if they catch you poaching on my land. They won't be gentle with you, I can assure you, so don't say you haven't been warned!"
"Ar," Hobden said innocently, "that reminds me . . ."

longer. Still he did not move, though his eyes continually shifted their focus as he fondly appraised every thing of beauty in the landscape before him. He sat so still that rabbits played fearlessly about him; so close that he could have almost have reached them with his hand.

When the cigar had burnt down close to his flaccid lips he extinguished it in the soil of a freshly-made mole hill, put the stub in a tin tobacco box then smoothed the soil with a delicate touch, wiping out the scar he had made.

"Time old Joe Crossley showed up," he muttered. "I bain't goin' to wait much longer for him. I dunno as I really need a marker. I can alus go an' have a look at the target arter I've shot. But it means a mort o' walkin' back an' forth."

A low drone filled the air and a large, bird-like shadow passed swiftly over the hill side.

John Hobden watched the encircling 'plane with idle curiosity and he was not unduly interested when presently it swooped down and lighted on the level space below. There was an R.A.F. flying field not far distant and the sight of 'planes had become a commonplace to the people of the Downs.

Hobden looked at his old-fashioned watch. It was two o'clock.

"I bain't goin' to wait for Joe no longer," he decided. "Ar! There he be." As he spoke a red flag was hauled to the top of a staff at the distant butts.

Hobden rose to his feet, slung his rifle over his shoulder, folded his ground sheet and put it in his basket—then he moved off down the hill, following the winding path.

When he came to the level of the valley he was over-taken by a young, good-looking man in the uniform of a pilot of the R.A.F.

"Can you tell me where Sir Harry Peer's house is?" he asked.

Hobden looked at him from beneath his shaggy eyebrows.

"Ar. That I can. If you come along wi' me a piece I can put you on the proper road to it. It's a couple o' miles an' more. You ought to ha' got that contraption o' yourn a good bit nearer than this."

The airman laughed.

"I'm near enough, Gaffer. And I don't want to see Sir Harry. But he's got a daughter." He nudged Hobden in the ribs with his elbow. "Understand?"

"Ar!" Hobden said stolidly.

"And so," the airman continued, breezily. "If you see me running you'll know Sir Harry's after me. Trip him up for me, will you?"

"Ar!" Hobden said, heavily.

They walked in silence for a little while and the airman set a pace that seemed too fast for Hobden. He slowed down after a little while and said:

"Going rabbit shooting, Gaffer?"

"Not exactly, mister," Hobden panted. "Though to be sure I might be wingin' a few magpies in a manner o' speakin'."

"Magpies!" the other exclaimed, in puzzled tones.

"That's right, mister," Hobden said. "I'm goin' to do a bit o' target practice."

"Oh. I see." The airman looked a little confused. "So you're a soldier—a Territorial, eh?"

"No, that I bain't," Hobden exclaimed, indignantly. "I don't hold wi' such. I'm a—a pacifister, I be. But about this shootin'. The Squire's that set on it an' if it pleases him to have me come down here three or four times a month an' waste a mort o' cartridges—w'y I don't mind doin' it. It 'ud be criminal not to, seein' as 'e gives prizes to the best shots wi' all manner o' consolations an' free beer to all an' sundry. An' seein' I be no manner o' good at the long ranges—nor so good at the short 'uns for the matter o' that!—I got the Squire to gi' me a handful o' cartridges an' I be goin' to do a bit o' practisin', like."

"What. All alone?"

"Ar! 'Cept for the chap what's up at the butts now, waitin' to mark for me. The other chaps have to work—but I don't hold wi' it. The Squire don't work, so w'y should I?"

The airman laughed.

"That's right, Gaffer."

They were silent then until they reached the 800 yards range. Then Hobden said:

"You follow that path, mister, an' it'll take you to Sir Harry's entrance gates. An' good luck to 'ee. An' I got to get to me shootin'. I see old Joe Crossley's gettin' impatient judgin' by the way 'e's waving that marking disc about."

As he spoke the target came into view and Hobden spread his ground sheet, emptied his pocket of cartridges and sprawled full length on his belly.

He loaded, aimed and fired with a jerky pull at the trigger.

A red flag waved derisively in front of the target.

The airman laughed.

"Try keeping your eyes open next time and squeeze the trigger. You pulled off."

John Hobden looked up at him with a sheepish grin.

"I thought you'd gone, mister," he said. "But I thank 'ee for the tip—though to be sure the Squire's been tellin' me that self same thing more times than I like to think on."

The airman nodded, waved a good-bye and hurried off along the path Hobden had indicated.

John Hobden stared after him thoughtfully.

"Now I do wonder," he mused, "w'y I talked like that to 'ee. Regular old woman I were. Ar! An' w'y did I act like as if I'd never had a gun in my hand afore? 'E's a clean, upstandin' chap even if the truth bain't in him. Or mebbe it is. Mebbe 'e don't know that Sir Harry bain't got a daughter. Sides which, 'e ought to ha' known I weren't goin' rabbiting wi' a rifle."

He looked towards the target and saw that it had been hauled down and a tiny figure was capering about on the top of the mound waving two white flags above his head.

"Gor!" Hobden chuckled. "Old Joe's actin' like a naggin' woman wi' a hot pertater in her mouth. Suppose I got to talk wi' him afore 'e busts wi' the things 'e wants to say."

He got to his feet and standing on a mound he tied cotton signalling flags to two collapsible staffs he took from his pocket and having wig-wagged a "Go-ahead" signal he laboriously wrote down the message the other sent to him:

"How much longer do you think I'm going to hang about here? You lazy lout! Who told you you could shoot? Your first shot was a mile wide."

John Hobden very slowly—he was not as proficient as was Crossley—wig-wagged his reply:

"You take the dirt out of your eyes. That shot were a bull, Joe."

The answer to that was derisive and devastatingly obscene and for nearly half an hour the two men—they had learnt the signalling *and* language over twenty years previously—exchanged long range insults.

"Just like a couple o' Boy Scouts, dang my eyes if we bain't," John Hobden chuckled as, finally, Joe Crossley signalled that he'd had enough talking and Hobden had better get on with his shooting.

Once again the target appeared above the butts. Once again John Hobden got down to a firing position. But now he did everything with a mathematical precision and an almost old-maidish fastidiousness.

He arranged his cartridges—there were eleven of them—in a neat row on the ground sheet; beside them he put a little pot of grease. He adjusted his sights and noted with satisfaction that the danger flag was hanging down limply—no need for him to make any adjustment to his wind gauge to correct wind drift and the heat refraction was negligible. He worked his bolt and after dipping the metalled tip of one of the cartridges in the grease loaded it into the chamber and shot the bolt home. He adjusted the sling more comfortably, wriggled as if he were making a bed for his body in the sun-warmed earth, pulled his weather-greened, wide-brimmed felt hat down lower over his eyes and then, with his cheek cuddling lovingly against the stock of the rifle, he aligned his sights on the far distant target. For a moment the muzzle of the rifle wobbled, then, as he seemed to stop breathing and became welded into the weapon, he fired.

"Magpie at three, I'm thinking," he said.

A moment later the marking disc appeared on a level with the target and was twisted round and round, showing first white then black. Finally it came to rest on the target at three o'clock.

Hobden's next shot was an inner. His third a bull. He grunted with satisfaction and fired six more shots at wide spaced intervals and of the six three were inners and three bulls—and all were well in a line with his first.

As he settled down for his tenth shot the target disappeared.

"Joe's up to his old game," John Hobden chuckled. And he waited, his eyes glued to the spot where the target had disappeared. Presently it shot up and down again—but in the brief time of its exposure Hobden fired. He waited for it to appear again—instead the danger flag at the butt was hauled down.

"Old Joe's lost count," Hobden laughed. "Or mebbe 'e's had enough o' sittin' alone in the pit. Well, I've done enough. If the other chaps be up to mark we ought to come nigh winnin' on Saturday."

He sat up and cleaned his rifle. That done to his satisfaction he put away his pot of grease, pocketed the unused cartridge, folded up the ground sheet and sat with his back to the butts, staring blankly up the valley to where the plane stood; at the distance it looked like a bird with its wings gracefully spread for instant flight.

Hobden made himself more comfortable intending to snatch forty winks while waiting for Joe Crossley to join him; then the two of them would wend their way lazily over the Downs to the Royal Oak. If they didn't hurry they'd arrive there about opening time. In anticipation he savoured the flavour of a pint of "old" and it added to his peaceful satisfaction.

(*please turn to page* 20)

The picture on the left shows a traffic militiaman in summer uniform, and below is one in winter uniform. Below on the left is a policeman who is a member of a militia art studio, which, every ten days, goes into the country near Moscow to paint landscapes and studies, from nature

RUSSIAN COP

BY LARS MOËN

So much has been written about Russia's secret policemen that we thought it would be pleasant to have the truth of the matter from somebody who has lived in Moscow for five years, knowing well that he is in no way prejudiced. The truth is pleasant this time!

FOR fifteen years Sergei Ivanovich has been a Moscow militiaman, or, to use the equivalent English term, a police constable. To give him his full title, he is a member of the Workers' and Peasants' Militia of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs. That means that he belongs to a branch of the N.K.V.D., which certain London newspapers prefer to designate erroneously by its former name, the Ogpu, presumably because the word "Ogpu" sounds a better hobgoblin to horrify their readers with—and what can one error more or less matter to newspapers who print exclusively news despatches about the Soviet Union originating in the notorious propaganda factories of Warsaw and Riga? (Apropos of that, I have discovered, since my return, that innumerable Londoners actually think that Riga and Warsaw are in the Soviet Union—which is just as well for the newspapers concerned !)

However, to return to Police Constable Sergei Ivanovich.

In 1914 he was a raw farm lad, mobilized, along with millions of others, to fight against Germany and Austria. Life in the army was bitterly uncomfortable, but life on the farm had not accustomed Sergei Ivanovich to expect luxury, so he accepted it as the natural lot of the soldier.

Only one thing really worried him; when they were finally sent into action in Galicia he had no rifle —but as several hundred thousand of his comrades had no rifles either, he assumed that that was also one of the inevitable hardships of soldiering. The German artillery pounded them mercilessly, feebly opposed by the Russian guns because, as every soldier knew, they had no munitions.

Then came the day of the big attack, but still Private Sergei Ivanovich had no rifle. Vaguely he rebelled at this and began to wonder if the soldiers who were beginning to grumble about the Government back home, and openly called the Tsarina the *Nyemka*—"that German woman"—might be right. But he took it philosophically on the whole, and supposed that if he were going to die, he would die with a rifle, or without one.

So he went over the top with the others, under orders to watch until a comrade with a rifle fell, then to take his gun and ammunition and carry on. Across the marshes they went, in the face of withering enfilade machine-gun fire. Sergei Ivanovich saw scores of his comrades impaled on German bayonets, but before he had a chance to obtain a rifle, it was all over. The German soldier who was going to finish him off, saw that he was unarmed and took him prisoner instead—so perhaps, in a way, the lack of a rifle saved his life that day.

Several very unhappy years in a German prison camp followed. Sergei Ivanovich had never been accustomed to eat a great deal, but in the camp he learned a new conception of hunger. Soup made of potato peelings was their principal fare. Bread was scarce and almost inedible, and the taste of meat became a vague memory.

But what hurt him most of all, was the faces and emaciated bodies of the German children whom he saw playing round the camp. That the Germans should keep their Russian prisoners on starvation rations seemed natural enough—but if they couldn't feed their own children, why didn't they give in and finish the thing?

There was a young revolutionary in the camp who had escaped from Siberia shortly before the war and had entered the army to carry on work among the men. He found many ready listeners in the camp and when Sergei Ivanovich discovered a philosophy which seemed to him to offer hope of an ultimate end to senseless warfare, he eagerly embraced it.

Consequently, when they finally returned to Russia, Sergei and the young revolutionary entered the Red Army and served during the final years of

the Civil War. Demobilisation found Sergei in Moscow and, since his mother was dead and his only brother had been killed in the early days of the revolution, he decided to remain there.

The transition from soldier to militiaman was not difficult for him. At first it was very little different from sentry duty in the army, for he wore his old uniform and carried his rifle.

It was unfortunate, however, that there were no cartridges available for the rifle. The appearance of the gun was enough to frighten petty offenders, but when a gang of brigands set about him seriously one night, the absence of ammunition was too great a handicap and he found himself their prisoner. Impressed by his appearance and the fight he had put up, he was offered a lucrative connection with the band. When they were finally convinced that he would have none of this, they left him, as they supposed, for dead. His peasant vitality saved him, however, and he played a considerable part in bringing the gang to book.

Those were strange, lawless years in Moscow. The old régime had been destroyed, and nothing had yet been created to take its place. Moscow was like a city more dead than alive. More than half the population had fled into the country, either to find food or because they were of a social class that had little to hope for from the new masters of the Kremlin.

There was little food in the city, save a few mouldy potatoes. No shops of any sort were open, and there was only a little bartering in the *rinoks*, or public markets. There was no fuel, either for cooking or heating.

Those who found a bit of food waited until after dark to carry it home, fearful of being waylaid and robbed if they were seen with it.

Nevertheless, the worst of the lawlessness had passed, and Sergei Ivanovich, with others of his kind, was there to see that everything was kept orderly.

Sergei often went hungry in those days, but he had been hungry as a peasant, hungry as a soldier, hungry in prison camp and hungry during the Civil War, so the experience was not unique.

Then came the New Economic Policy and the period of Military Communism was declared at an end. The hard-headed, practical Lenin (influenced, some say, by the mutiny of an army corps) realised that there must be a breathing spell—that food must come to the cities and merchandise go to the peasants before any beginnings of activity could be restored. So he permitted the resumption of private trading and sold important concessions to foreign firms.

Now followed an era of material prosperity for many, such as the inhabitants were not to see again for more than a decade; but it was an era of hard work for Sergei Ivanovich and his fellows. Moscow looked like a mining camp during a gold-rush. The population flocked back, and along with traders came shady speculators and, in their wake, a horde of criminals. Gambling was legalised; cabaret turns became more and more indecent.

In such an era of "easy money" and easy morals, crime flourished and Sergei had a great deal to do. Drug addiction became widespread, and made the criminal class more desperate and more dangerous.

Lenin lay in the grip of paralysis, no longer able to direct affairs and, though he was still alive, Stalin, Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev were already in the midst of a merciless struggle to determine future policy and, incidentally, the succession.

Sergei, who had learned to read by this time, read some and thought a great deal more. It was a worrying time when one was tempted at moments to feel that everything the revolution had fought for had been sacrificed on the altar of expediency.

His service at Tsaritsin, however, where he had seen Stalin organise military success out of nothing, to be followed by disaster when Trotsky relieved him and put in his own subordinates, had given Sergei unbounded faith in the stocky Georgian, and when he eventually came to power Sergei felt that everything was going to be all right. From that day to this he has never wavered from that view.

Now nearing middle age, Sergei is still a simple militiaman, though he has repeatedly been offered promotion. He has that deprecatory humility of those who have learned their letters late in life and, hence, have an exaggerated respect for culture. As a militiaman, he feels that he is doing his bit towards maintaining that orderliness which is his passion in life, doing a job that he knows; at a desk, directing others, he would have only a second-hand satisfaction at best. So a P.C. he remains and probably will remain until old age forces him to go on a pension.

And so we leave Sergei Ivanovich, P.C., standing on a busy corner directing traffic—everything must be orderly!—while at the back of his mind he rehearses a speech he is to make that night at a MOPR (the International Labour Defence) meeting on "The Brazilian Putsch and Its Possible Effect on the Liberation of Prestes."

LARS MOËN
as he appears to the French artist S. Jonckhèere

Broadly speaking, the police organisation in Moscow has three branches; the secret political police; MUR, the Moscow C.I.D.; and the Militia, of which Sergei Ivanovich is a member. All three are embraced in the N.K.V.D., of which MUR and the Militia are sub-divisions.

This nation-wide unification of police services under the Commissariat of Internal Affairs has enormous practical advantages. There is no possible dispute as to whether a given case is a matter for the local, the district, or the national police, since they are all one organisation. In the same way, the search for wanted criminals is much facilitated by national co-ordination of police records.

I cannot, myself, pretend to inside knowledge or expert competence in this matter, but not long ago I dined with an American police commissioner, then on a tour of Europe, who had been permitted to see a great deal of the organisation and functioning of the Moscow police. While he made a few minor criticisms of the quality of equipment, from an American point of view, there was no mistaking the fact that he had been extremely impressed by what he had seen, even in comparison with such advanced police systems as those of France, England and Germany.

The present N.K.V.D. is a re-organisation of the Ogpu., which, in turn, came from the Cheka, or Supreme Commission. Not a great deal of reliable information is available about the early days of the Cheka, but in a sense it must be considered a continuation of the Okhrana, or tsarist secret police, or the claim that many members of the Okhrana became members of the Cheka is rather doubtful. Certainly, much of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Okhrana must of necessity have been taken over, and much of its methods, since the Russians knew no other.

After the first phase of the revolution, Kerensky may have had the idealistic notion of doing away with secret police, since he began publishing the secret archives of the Okhrana, thus giving the show away. And just as the magician who reveals the secrets of his tricks becomes very unpopular with his fellow conjurors, when Kerensky was falling he could not even obtain the support of the army chiefs who were later to fight to the death against the bolsheviks.

Lenin, in a sense more genuinely idealistic than Kerensky, but with a far better grip on the realities of the situation, put a stop to the publication of the secret archives and entrusted his friend, Felix Dzerzhinski, with the task of forming the Cheka.

The Okhrana protected the tsarist dynasty; the Cheka-Ogpu-N.K.V.D. protects what you will consider either the dictatorship of the proletariat under Stalin's leadership, or the Stalin dictatorship, according to the colour of your political views. The instrument of government has not changed, nor could its methods change other than very slowly.

Dear old ladies will perhaps be shocked when I say that Russia cannot be governed by other methods for a long time to come; that is, until the Russian mentality and tradition have changed; but the practical politician, whatever he may say publicly, will know that I am right.

And now, in order to close on a somewhat less grim note, I should like to tell you one or two reminiscences about the Moscow police, including the story of how a friend of mine "ragged" a traffic officer.

A couple of years ago a fine of three roubles (roughly half a crown) was introduced for crossing certain principal streets elsewhere than at the crossings marked by studs in the asphalt. The fine is collected by the traffic officer on the spot, saving useless police court procedure.

This friend of mine was highly incensed at what he considered a violation of his inalienable right to cross the street when and where he chose, and determined that he would continue to do so. So he prepared himself by going to the bank and obtaining 300 one-kopek pieces, having a total value of three roubles. The kopek piece is a tiny, thin coin, rather smaller than the old English "thruppenny bit." He put the 300 of them in a little cloth bag and stowed them away in his pocket.

Within a few days, as he was crossing the Arbat in the middle of a block, there was a shrill whistle, which he ignored. The toots became more insistent. As he reached the opposite kerb the policeman caught up with him.

"Citizen! You can't cross the street here!"

My friend faced him with a bland, open countenance.

"Oh, can't I? All right, I'll go back again!" And he started to re-cross the street.

"Come back! You can't cross here—and so that you'll remember next time, that will cost you three roubles fine!"

The policeman prepared the receipt, while my friend, pretending to be very crestfallen, drew out the money-bag. The officer held out his hand and my friend began to count out the tiny coins:

"One—two—three—four—five—six—seven——"

He had counted out about 30 when the policeman's patience began to waver.

"What sort of joke is this, citizen?"

My friend glanced up with a look of annoyance.

"Now you've made me lose count! Don't interrupt!"

He took the coins back and started again.

"I can't stand here all day neglecting traffic! Let me have it in notes!"

Again my friend took back the handful of coins.

"There! You've made me lose count again! I shall make a complaint against you."

By the time he had reached a hundred the officer was probably nearer homicide than he had ever been in his life. Looking for a way out, he suddenly spotted an old lady who was already half way across the street. He blew his whistle furiously and, as he dashed away, called back:

"Take your bag of kopeks and get to blazes out of here—but don't let me catch you again!"

Not infrequently, however, the laugh is provided by the foreign tourist himself, as, for instance, the American society matron who was being shown over Bolshevo, the labour commune where "bad boys" are reformed by teaching them a trade and teaching them how to live. (If you saw the film *The Road to Life*, you saw the beginnings of this important penal experiment of the G.P.U.)

Well, this good lady had spent an entire afternoon, being shown the workshops, dormitories, recreation rooms and other features, by a long-suffering guide.

At the end of the afternoon, she turned to the guide with a disarming smile, and said: "But tell me just one thing! How does one become a member of this club?"

Not unlike her was another lady who was standing with a friend of mine outside the New Moscow hotel when a company of G.P.U. soldiers went by, green caps set jauntily on their heads, singing lustily (and very well!) a song that could be heard for half a mile.

"That," said my friend carelessly, "was the G.P.U."

The old lady was properly impressed. In an awed voice, scarcely audible above the vociferous singing, she asked:

"And what are they doing?"

My friend looked round furtively, then put his finger to his lips.

"Sssssh! he cautioned. "They're shadowing someone!"

THE STAMP OF THE BEAST

The old white hunter, wise in the ways of rogue elephants, knew there was something very suspicious in this killing which had taken place on the edge of the jungle

BY C. T. STONEHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY ALFRED SINDALL

BUNGO PIKE sat in his farmhouse listening to a tragic tale. It concerned the death of George Blair, stamped into eternity by an elephant. Bungo had left Blair in charge of his coffee shamba in Kenya while he took a much-needed holiday in South Africa. News of the accident had recalled him.

He heard all about it from Ben Cloete, a neighbouring farmer who had cared for Bungo's place after the manager's death. But information about the affair was scanty. Cloete had been summoned one morning, from his farm five miles away, to the stream at the boundary of Bungo's land. There the spoor of a big elephant pointed to the body of young Blair.

"He was in shorts, bare-headed, wearing canvas shoes," said Ben. "The beast had trodden on his head. He must have been taking a walk round when the brute came out of the forest and caught him.

"Williams, the District Commissioner, came out and held the inquest. He is buried out there under the big podocarpus."

"Williams," said Bungo, "what's happened to Stapleton?"

"Oh, of course, you don't know—Stapleton has absconded. He took all the hut-tax money, about six hundred quid, they reckon, and vanished. Left his wife, and all. He's not been heard of since."

Bungo was astonished. He had liked Tom Stapleton. But in this country you never knew what a fellow would do next.

"I suppose poor Blair was smashed flat," he observed, returning to the important subject.

"No," said Ben. "Only his head caught it. I reckon the beast knocked him down and gave him one stamp, or a kick and then pushed off. That was more than enough : it made me sick to look at him."

Ben rode off back to his farm, having work to do. It was neighbourly of him to take charge during Bungo's absence and Bungo produced suitable remuneration for the Dutchman's services. Bungo sat down to think things over.

He had spent eight years on the farm, developing and planting. Before that he had been a white hunter, a strenuous calling. This was the first holiday he had taken since coming to the country and it had not turned out well. He had thought himself fortunate in getting young Blair as manager for, despite his reserved and somewhat unlikeable disposition, the chap had been efficient. He was particularly good with natives, having made a study of their language and customs.

Bungo sent for Joseph. The headman was a Lumbwa, trained at a mission school. He could read and write Swahili and was a conscientious, diligent n'yempara over Bungo's staff of seventy labourers. Joseph greeted his master in English, and stood politely at attention.

"Tell me what happened," said Bungo briefly.

"On that night it was as usual. Bwana Blair had dinner and sat here reading. Often he read very late, and when I went round the cattle boma before going to bed, I saw the light in this room. The night was misty but there was a small moon. I heard a lion out on the veld, but he did not come near."

"What happened?" Bungo's hard voice cut short the headman's circumlocutory recital.

"The next morning Kipsoi's wife came to tell me she had found the Bwana dead by the river. I sent a man to fetch Bwana Cloete, then I went to look. He was dead. There was the spoor of the elephant that killed him. It was M'lefu."

"M'lefu!" said Bungo slowly. He knew that particular beast, an old solitary bull cast out from the herd, living on the slopes of the mountain. M'lefu had seemed to him a peaceful, harmless animal.

"I recognised the spoor," said Joseph. "So did Myna and Chelal. It was M'lefu."

"Do you know why Bwana Blair should go there in the night without his rifle?"

Joseph shook his head. His expression was wooden. The straight-featured, thin-lipped countenance of a Lumbwa is as enigmatical as that of a Chinaman.

"So he is dead—and M'lefu yet lives," said Bungo.

Joseph moistened his lips and was silent. It was a small thing, but Bungo had not spent most of his life in this land without making discoveries. He knew the headman was uneasy.

"To-morrow we go hunting that elephant, you and I."

Again Joseph's tongue passed over his lips. "Who will look after the farm?" he inquired.

"It can take care of itself for a day or two."

"There is my wife, who is expecting a child."

"The women will attend to that. Since when has a warrior avoided the hunt for such a thing? You used to be fond of hunting, Joseph; are you afraid?"

A Lumbwa is never afraid : the headman shook his head in a decided negative.

"Very well, we will start at dawn," said Bungo, and dismissed him.

Bungo looked for papers and found plenty—letters from the boy's parents and friends in England; bills from Indian traders and the like. He discovered that Blair had been heavily in debt; there were demands from Nairobi shopkeepers and two solicitor's letters. There was also a note which caused him considerable thought. It bore no address and was undated. "Usual place, usual time, to-night," was all it said, and it was signed "Mary."

Bungo could think of no woman of that name. He supposed the note was old, referring to some affair in Blair's past. He was a good-looking youngster and had probably made his conquests among the married women of this free-and-easy colony.

It was a melancholy business going through a dead man's kit. Bungo went out in the sunshine again. All he could do was to avenge the unlucky victim; he would hunt out that old rogue, M'lefu, and put a stop to his tantrums. He wondered why Joseph did not like the idea of it.

A remarkable thing happened. One of the big ravens that frequented the place in search of offal, passed overhead, carrying a piece of paper in its beak probably as nesting material. Suddenly seeing the man behind a bush, it veered sharply and dropped its burden to utter a warning croak. The paper fluttered almost to Bungo's feet. It was an envelope addressed to George Blair and it bore the mark of the split stick in which native runners carry messages.

Bungo noticed that; and also the writing. He had seen that writing before, over the signature "Mary."

So the woman Blair was to meet lived in this district!

Bungo set his memory to work. There were not more than half a dozen young, pretty women in this farming district; he considered each in turn. Then he had it—Mary Stapleton! He had not known the District Commissioner very well; he remembered him as a slight, weak-chinned sort of cheap, wearing sunglasses—always complaining of the heat. She was fair, good-looking, young, with a disdainful manner.

Bungo recollected intruding on a stormy scene in the Government office, could hear again the words of expostulation : "I won't stand it, Mary!" He was certain of this; Mary had been the name, all right.

Well, Stapleton's wife had been conducting a clandestine affair with George Blair; had pinched the hut-tax money and bolted. The question was, had he knocked his wife's lover on the head first? Bungo intended to find out. He did not think himself superstitious, but the way the raven had dropped the envelope was very peculiar. Almost like a message for him.

At dawn he made preparations for his hunting trip. Joseph was ill in his hut; he sent word that he could not walk. Bungo said nothing.

Slowly and skilfully he quartered the banks of the stream, looking for spoor at the drinking places. He found traces of elephants, but not of the bull he sought. At some time in his career M'lefu had suffered an injury to one foot, the print of it was unmistakable.

By afternoon Bungo had worked back into the forest where certain main elephant trails might show tracks of the lone bull. He found none, but he came on a clearing where lay the skeleton of a big elephant. Vultures and ants had picked the bones clean, hyenas had dragged them about. It took Bungo half an hour to make a thorough investigation. At the end of it he had convinced himself that some large bones were unaccountably missing. He returned to the farm in a thoughtful mood.

The result of his cogitations was that he got out his car and drove to the township. Leaving the car at the hotel, he sought a hut in the midst of the native quarter. It was the abode of Gitchaba, a noted witch-doctor, whom Bungo had known for many years and with whom he had negotiated profitable business.

After dark he found the new District Commissioner and the police officer taking their sundowners in the hotel lounge. Murray, the policeman, was a friend and Williams soon became one. Bungo invited both men to dinner at the farm. There would be an entertainment, he explained : Gitchaba, the lybon, was coming out to give a demonstration of the art of divination.

Murray knew Bungo often employed witch-doctors and chaffed him about it, but Williams was

With a peculiar motion Gitchaba cast his charms onto the blanket before him. They scattered and rolled and came to rest

deeply interested, for as yet he had seen nothing of the sorcery of this tribe. They drove out in Bungo's car, arriving in good time for dinner.

Joseph had recovered from his indisposition; he came forward cheerfully to greet his master. Bungo pointed to a spot in the compound before the raised stoep.

"I want a big log fire built here, Joseph," he ordered. "After dinner we are going to have some fun. Gitchaba is coming out to tell fortunes."

The headman stared at him. "Gitchaba!" he said slowly and seemed to shrink.

"Your n'yempara is scared of the lybon," observed Murray, looking keenly at the man.

"They all are," Bungo told him. "Gitchaba has a great reputation around here. But they'll all turn up for the show, because not one of them dare put a slight on the smeller-out of witches."

Bungo was right; during dinner the white men could hear the shuffle and murmur of a crowd assembling and, when they took their chairs on the stoep, the compound was full of black figures, squatting in orderly rows. In the midst burnt a big fire of cedar logs; its light illuminated a square of hard-beaten earth, left vacant like a stage. About this was the audience, talking together in low tones, their teeth and eyeballs glistening in the red light.

Gitchaba sat on a skin blanket in the foreground. He rose and made a salaam as the Europeans appeared. He was in the habiliments of his trade and presented a gruesome, nightmare figure. His face and body were smeared with stripes of red and white clay, a head-dress of leopard skin increased his height to gigantic proportions, porcupine quills protruded from neck and ears. He was liberally decorated with dried lizards and snakes and a girdle of human bones clattered as he moved—"A real disciple of Old Nick," as Williams remarked.

Bungo took his pipe from his mouth and addressed the lybon. "Strange things have been happening here, Gitchaba. A m'zungu has been killed by an elephant and no man knows why. Throw your bones and see if you can make a picture for us to show how it was this Bwana went walking in the night and met his death. There are no secrets from the spirits and Gitchaba is their servant."

Murray whistled softly. "So that's the game!" he said, softly. "Well, you never know what may come to light at these shows."

The witch-doctor inclined his head gravely. In a deep voice, he said: "As you will, Bwana. I will ask questions of the Unseen Ones, and perhaps I shall solve riddles."

He squatted down again and took from a skin bag a variety of objects—human knuckle bones, lions' teeth, strange-shaped pebbles. These he gathered in cupped hands, holding them first to one ear then to the other while he muttered and clucked as if having secret converse with them. The audience was still as stone, appalled by these mysteries enacted before their eyes.

With a peculiar motion Gitchaba cast his charms onto the blanket before him. They scattered and rolled and came to rest in a pattern. For a long minute the lybon regarded them, then in a slow monotone he pronounced his discoveries.

"A big elephant who was the friend of Bwana Bungo lived in the forest yonder. The white man named Blair coveted this wealth. He shot the elephant and black men took the tusks and hid them till they might be sold. On the next night came a visitor and him Blair killed. I see a lighted room and the two men struggling. A black man enters and gives his master a club. With that rungu the visitor is slain."

The lybon fell silent, staring at his charms as if hypnotised.

"I don't get this," said Murray, quickly. "He's guessing—and guessing all wrong."

"Wait a bit," Bungo told him. "You'll understand before he is done."

The lybon was speaking again. "In a glade by the river they put the dead man and then he was dressed in the clothes of Blair. Men came out of the forest carrying the feet of the elephant. Thus were the marks made to show that an elephant did this killing."

Said Williams excitedly: "Gitchaba, I will give you twenty shillings for the names of those men."

The witch-doctor took no notice, but raised his eyes to glare at the silent ranks of his countrymen.

"Come forth, Myna, Kipsoi, Joseph!" he cried, loud and commanding.

There was a rustle of movement as all heads were turned; a thud of flying feet where two black forms disappeared into the darkness.

"Never mind," said Williams. "We'll catch them later. They've got Joseph, all right."

The headman was pushed out into the open. He stood confronting his accuser, blinking stupidly as if awakening from sleep.

"You were blood-brother to Blair," said Gitchaba. "Often he stayed with you in your village. Myna and Kipsoi, your father's sons, were of your fellowship. It was you, Chiloa, whom white men call Joseph, who smashed the face of the dead man so that none might know him; you it was who showed how the prints of the elephant might be made—and it was to you Blair gave some of the hut-tax money, to seal your lips."

With an animal cry the headman threw himself at the seer. But in an instant he was caught and overpowered.

"Lock him in the store," Bungo directed. He rose and stretched himself. "Well, that's finished that. Let's go in for a drink." He beckoned to Gitchaba and led the way into the house.

"This is a shocking business," said Williams, throwing himself into an easy chair. "I don't understand half of it. Who was murdered and why?"

Bungo stood by the fireplace filling his pipe. Murray watched him attentively. The witch-doctor stood, motionless as a tree, just inside the door.

"Blair killed Tom Stapleton," said Bungo. "He was carrying on with Stapleton's wife. Tom must have paid him a visit here late at night, to talk the thing out with him. He didn't want a scandal, of course, and he knew Blair's habit of reading half the night. Probably he left his car out in the bush and crept in here. But Joseph spotted him. I take it there was a row and Stapleton got biffed on the head with Joseph's rungu. The murderers were in a mess, but they cooked up a clever scheme to get out of it. Kipsoi and Myna were routed out; they carried the body down to the river, where Blair changed clothes with the corpse. Joseph did the disfiguring while the other found the elephant Blair had shot, and skinned off two of its feet. By standing inside the leg-skin and jumping up and down they could make spoor good enough to deceive people."

Bungo blinked at the match he had struck. "They wouldn't have deceived me, of course. Men don't go walking a long way at night in snake country, wearing canvas shoes; and elephants make tracks with more than two feet. All four tootsies aren't the same, you know."

Murray looked abashed.

"The scoundrel!" said Williams, slowly, "But how did he get away?"

"Well, that's supposition; but I think it fits. He was dressed like Stapleton; he rubbed some native die on his fair hair and put on the glasses. Then he drove the car back to town, found the lady and told her what had happened. It was easy enough to enter the office and open the safe with Stapleton's keys. The asikari on duty thought it was his boss, of course. The money provided means for a getaway."

"He drove into Lumbwa and caught the morning train," said Murray. "No one answering his description arrived in Nairobi; he vanished."

"Naturally. He changed back to Blair again—with the addition of the glasses and, perhaps, an American accent. It would be safest to play the tourist. I suppose he stopped here on his way to hand over some of the pelf to his confederates. By this time he is in England, or the States and I'll bet you Mary Stapleton has joined him. She must have been quite daffy on him."

"She sailed for Singapore, of all places," said Murray.

"A very good place, considering."

Murray nodded. "How did you find all this out?" he demanded. "You arranged the whole thing with Gitchaba, didn't you?"

Bungo was thoughtful. "Not entirely," he confessed. "I suspected the accident had been faked and I found out how. I knew Joseph was mixed up in it; I knew Blair and Stapleton's wife had an understanding. But I thought it was Blair who had been murdered. Gitchaba put me on the right track with his devil-business. Then all the pieces dropped into place and I saw the whole thing clearly."

He addressed the silent native. "You're a durn fine witch-doctor, aren't you, Gitchaba?"

"Verily," replied the old man, who had not understood a word.

"Did you, perchance, meet and recognise Blair that night when he went to rob the safe?" Murray asked, curiously.

Gitchaba gave him a wooden stare. He tapped his head with his finger. "I know, Bwana!" he said solemnly.

The policeman sighed. "You certainly do—all about Joseph and the rest of it. If I knew how you know, what a simple job crime detection in this district would be!"

A DAY AT LARGE

"No more dotty than we are," was the general opinion of Mr. James, but there's more in madness than meets the eye!

BY A. M. BURRAGE

ILLUSTRATED BY BERTRAM PRANCE

A GOOD fairy rode on the freshening breeze that summer morning. With a boldness perhaps a trifle unbecoming to one of her sex and goodness, she entered James Hollander's bedroom by way of one of the windows; but she roused him modestly enough. A cord hung loose over the closed lower sash and she set the tasselled end swinging—*thud-thud, thud-thud,* against the glass. Then as a pair of mild brown eyes opened to blink at sudden sunlight, she silently withdrew. James Hollander blinked, stared and sat up in bed.

Seven-fifteen on a summer morning. So said the clock on the mantelpiece; so said the sunlight and the swaying foliage visible without. Seven-fifteen—and that beast Millingdale still snoring in the next room. He was never allowed to go very far without Millingdale. Indeed, he could not, for Millingdale held the purse for him, doled him out such money as he required and watched him spend it.

Hollander disliked Millingdale no more than he would have disliked any other man in Millingdale's place. He envied him, too. What could be pleasanter to such as Millingdale, than a job as attendant to a nice, quiet, courteous and educated Mental Case. Millingdale imposed on him, of course; tried to put obstacles in the way of projections which did not suit his own convenience; occasionally gave a glimpse of the Iron Hand; but so would most other men in Millingdale's place.

Hollander rose, got into a dressing-gown and padded along to the bathroom, where he exhibited his first sign of insanity—from one point of view—by taking a cold plunge. Afterwards he shaved, and while doing so he offered tacit thanks to the inventor of safety-razors. But for this great and good man he would have had to submit to Millingdale shaving him. "Although," he reflected, "that's a lot of rot. If a fellow wanted to do himself in, he could always swallow one or two blades."

His return to his bedroom awoke the faithful Millingdale. A sleepy voice addressed him through a door left ajar.

"Hullo, sir. You're up early."

"Yes. Lovely morning. By the way, Millingdale, we're going into Tavendon, this morning. Catching the ten-ten."

"Oh, are we, sir?" The tone suggested that the plan did not meet with the good Millingdale's approval. "I thought you was going to get on with your painting, sir."

"So I am—when I've got some more paints. That beastly little shop at Prittleford isn't any good. They've never got what I want. Bring some money with you. But we can get back in time for lunch."

If you asked the postman, now riding a bicycle up the drive, what he thought of Mr. James, he would tell you—if he were sure that you would not betray his confidence. It would come to this:

"Mr. James? As nice a gentleman as ever you see and no more dotty than what you and me are.

"Now I'll tell you just what happened. That old geezer who lives up at the house—she was his father's second wife—got a boy of her own. Wants the property for him.

"A few winters back Mr. James was laid up with a fever an' he done a very brave and very silly thing. There was a house on fire in the village and Mr. James gets up and goes out to see if he can help. He hears—what wasn't true—that somebody was still in the house, so he goes in. And a burnt beam falls on his head.

"So what with one thing and another he had brain-fever and they wouldn't have it that he ever made a proper recovery. That was the old woman's chance. So the property's managed by what they call a Power of Attorney, and when Mr. James dies everything will go to her side of the family. You see, *he* can't marry—not until he's certified sane—and he daren't make any kind of fuss. They'd put him away in an asylum if he did and he wouldn't want *that.* But if you ask me, he's as sane as the rest of us, only it wouldn't pay them what are around him to own it."

This would have been startlingly near the truth; and James had schooled himself to sweat his temper and watch carefully every step he took. Every impatient or angry word he uttered was reported to the local doctor, and went against him.

Meanwhile he enjoyed the quasi-liberty of prisoners-of-war on parole in the olden days, when the men of warring nations knew how to fight like gentlemen. He went out to meet the postman at the swinging iron gate. The postman wished him good morning, handed him letters, but held one back.

"I'd better take this up to the house, sir," he said. "It's registered."

"All right. I can sign for it. Who's it for?"

The postman blushed. Never was postman more awkwardly placed. There might be trouble if it were found that he had handed over to Mr. James a registered letter which presumably contained money. On the other hand, there might be still more imminent trouble if he refrained. Unwillingly he passed across the letter and a receipt form, and fumbled for a stub of pencil.

The letter bore Australian stamps. James frowned over it, signed for it and, as the postman turned the head of his bicycle, he broke the seal. He made no sound save for the sharp intaking of his breath as English banknotes dropped placidly into his hand.

Stupefied, he counted them before reading. Their value totalled a hundred pounds. He read, "My dear old chap," and then looked at the signature. Then he laughed.

Fancy old Jack being out in Queensland and apparently doing well. But why the hundred? He went on reading.

> *"I have just heard of the mess you are in. I heard from Todd, who said he had been down to see you, and he swears you are all right. He even goes so far as to drop a hint which I mustn't mention in writing. If you can make a get-away and come and join me out here, I'll see you through. Our laws are a bit different from yours. . . ."*

Dazedly he went on reading to the end, without at first extracting the full significance of the words. *"Cast thy bread upon the waters——"* he thought And this was the guerdon of kindness shown a few years since to a poorer undergraduate, the son of a poor clergyman who had come up to Oxford with little more than a schoolboy's allowance. He who had suffered too long the injustice of persons and of circumstances, was suddenly and deeply moved.

Millingdale spoke little on the short railway journey into Tavendon. At the best he was a man of small conversation. He disliked Mr. James partly because he saw too much of him, and partly because he knew that Mr. James hated him. But he kept fairly respectful, even when they were alone. Millingdale realised that he would lose his job if he made himself intolerable, and caused Mr. James to make sufficient fuss.

"Now don't you go givin' me the slip, sir," he said to James, outside Tavendon station.

James started slightly and asked him what he meant.

"I mean, sir, you're not known here. And if you was to get yourself lorst——"

"Good heavens!" said James lightly. "One would think I was a child."

"I know, sir, but all the same—where might this paint shop be?"

"You've been with me here scores of times?"

"Yes, and into scores of shops."

"Well, it's straight on," said James, as they came to a turning. And a moment later he corrected himself. He took the turning and Millingdale, baulked for the moment, pulled up and then turned to follow him. Sudden inspiration came to James with the sight of an approaching policeman, who saw the manœuvres of both men.

James went straight up to the policeman.

"Officer," he said, in a carefully studied tone, "I

"Look here," said James, trusting that the officer had never heard of him. "My name is Hollander. Here's my card and the address"

should be obliged if you would stop this man from following and molesting me."

"What's the matter, sir?"

The policeman pulled up, calm, gruff and courteous.

"He's been following me down here from the station, talking nonsense. He says he's my keeper."

The good Millingdale was flabbergasted.

"It's like this," he began to explain, haltingly. "The gentleman isn't very strong in the head, and I'm his attendant——"

There was nothing forced in James's laughter. It flowed like a spring. It seemed to ripple up straight from the heart.

"I've never seen him before in my life," he said.

"Oh!" exclaimed Millingdale with a sudden lift in his voice—for never, no never before had the tractable Mr. James behaved thus.

"Look here," said James, trusting that the officer had never heard of him, "my name is Hollander. Here's my card and the address. This extraordinary person whom I've never seen before insists——"

"That's all right, sir. I know which of you's behaving like a looney. Here you!" He glowered down at the disconcerted Millingdale, whose quickened excitement was continuing to rise. "You'd better take a walk with me. D'you want to charge him, sir? Molesting?"

James considered. "I don't know that I quite want to do that. He's probably what he's accused me of being—a little weak in the head."

The policeman laughed.

"Mind you," said James, with an air of strict impartiality, "he hasn't tried to get money out of me, or anything like that. I suggest your taking him along to the station and let the Divisional Surgeon have a look at him."

"Just what I'm about to do, sir," said the obliging officer.

"Come on," he said gruffly, turning to his captive "and no more lip. You'll have to thank a real gentleman if you don't have to stay inside."

On a street like the Strand it is never surprising for a man to meet somebody he knows. Indeed, having regard to James's sometime circle of acquaintances, and the adage about standing outside Charing Cross, it would have been strange had he not seen at least one familiar face. He saw only one, and it belonged to one Rodmell, shining like a pink beacon above the Old School Tie.

"Well, well, well!" cried Mr. Rodmell, extending the hand from which he had just snatched a lemon-coloured glove. "Where have you been all this time? Come and have a drink."

Five minutes later, over the rim of a glass, James said:

"I'm just off up to Cook's at Ludgate Hill, to book my passage. Queensland. What's the port? Do you know?"

"Why Australia?" Mr. Rodmell inquired. "You been doing anything wrong?"

"No. But I'm fed up with England, and I know a fellow. He wants me to come out. But he's a bit vague. His address is a box number at the post office of a town I've never heard of."

"Cook's'll put you right. Seen anybody we know lately?"

"No. I'm looking to you for news. I haven't been about much lately. Had a—er—a bit of a breakdown, you know. Seen anything of Maddison?"

Maddison had been one of his great friends at school, and Rodmell's face clouded a little at the mention of the name.

"Poor old Maddison?" he said.

"Why, what's wrong?"

"If you've got a fiver to spare before you go running about after sheep, I know where it would come in handy. He never had any money, you know, and a firm he was with has gone broke. Got a young wife, and her sister lives with them. She—the sister-in-law, I mean—does a job of work in the City. But she was out, too, when I heard a few days ago. Damned bad luck. And he's got an uncle, you know, a Harley Street specialist with pots of money, who won't move a finger to help him."

James drew in his breath, slowly and thoughtfully.

"Got his address on you?" he asked.

"Yes." Rodmell fumbled for a notebook. "Got the road and the number, but I'm not sure exactly where it is. Somewhere in Brixton—but Brixton's pretty big."

"A taxi driver would know," said James, thoughtfully.

And the early afternoon saw him paying the driver outside a block of red tenements, linked together by a grim outside iron staircase which climbed to the roof.

James went most of the way to the roof and knocked on a green door which bore the marks of sooty hands and the pencilled scribblings of unchastened errand boys. Footfalls sounded inside; the door opened; a moment later hands fell upon James's shoulders.

"Jimmy! Jimmy! My dear old man! Where have you been. Come in! Come in!"

James looked at Maddison's worn, lined face and shabby clothes, and suddenly found himself feeling wretched. He was not afterwards sure if the sudden rush of emotion were childish or feminine, or an unmanly mingling of the two.

"Come in, old boy, come in. My wife and sister-in-law are in the kitchen. I've told them heaps about you. And, of course, they read about it in the paper when it happened."

James stared.

"Read? What?"

"The fire, you know, and what you did."

James understood.

"Oh, that? Was it in the papers? I didn't know."

He was inside the flat now.

"Fact is," he explained, "I was pretty bad for a long while after that. Brain fever, you know. And now I'm supposed to be off my head."

"What?"

"Fact, I assure you. You're harbouring a lunatic who's just escaped and is beating it for the antipodes. They've got me fixed so that I can't touch my own money. But I've got hold of a bit, and I'm beating it for Australia—if they don't manage somehow to stop me."

In the little sitting-room Maddison turned.

"I was awfully bad, you know, but I'm all right now. I know I'm all right. That's what comes of having a stepmother who'll get my money on a reversion for her own son when I peg out. I know that sounds a bit mad to you—the sort of story which a hall-marked lunatic would tell and nobody would believe."

"Sit down, old man. My wife and Janet will be in in a minute. Then there'll be some tea."

James sat down.

"Er—how's the world using you?" he asked, lamely.

"Oh, not too badly."

"Not too——"

"Oh, we've had a foul time, but I've just got a job at last. Start next month. Hullo!"

James was suddenly conscious of two ladies entering the room. He became dazedly aware of being introduced, and of bowing automatically. He was deaf to a little eulogy of himself. It was as if sight had absorbed all his other senses for those few moments, and his gaze was for the younger girl. It takes some men suddenly like that, and James found himself afflicted with a real mental ailment; the oldest, commonest and most insidious, which struck down Adam before ever the serpent was heard in Eden.

In the fullness of time James found himself sitting down. He had a cup of tea in his hands, but he was not sure who had put it there. And he was being talked down. If only he could stop looking at Janet and wondering if her hair were more like pale spun gold than polished silver, he knew that he might have a better chance of following what was being said. It was almost a shout from Maddison which roused him at last.

"Hi! Jimmy!"

"Yes?"

"Wake up, old lad! Rose says, why don't you get my uncle to come down and see you?"

James blinked.

"Uncle? See me? Why should he?"

"Sir Charles Torring. *The* brain specialist. No doctor in the world 'ud like to contradict him. If he says you're all right, you're all right. And your people 'ud have to let him see you. But he wouldn't come for less than fifty pounds. If you could only raise that—for he's a mean old scoundrel, and he wouldn't drop a ha'penny to help any friend of mine. But if you're keen on going to Australia...."

"Australia!" James's gaze was still on Janet's sunny hair. "Who said I was going to Australia?"

"*You* did!"

"Well, I'm not. I shall find your uncle in the telephone directory, shan't I?"

Maddison grinned.

"Oh, good man!"

"Will he consider it a sign of lunacy if I pay him in advance to make sure that he comes down?"

They all three laughed.

"On the contrary," said Maddison, slowly. "It will create an excellent impression."

At odd times during the rest of his short stay, James was seen to be glancing anxiously and even apprehensively at Janet's hands. And although, just as Maddison was seeing him to the door, James put a sudden question, Maddison did not see the purport of it until some minutes later.

"Well, good-bye, and thanks ever so much. Look here, I've got about forty pounds I don't need. You'd better—oh, shut up, Maddison. Until you're better off. I say, could you tell me? Really, I've been out of things so long that I forget. When a girl's engaged, does she wear the ring on the third or middle finger?"

"The third, you ass."

"Sure?" Maddison heard a faint sigh of relief. "I mean it isn't this finger—the one I'm holding up—is it? Oh, that's all right, then."

"And if you ever do such a thing again," said Mrs. Hollander, concluding a little talk to her errant stepson late that evening, "you know where you'll have to go! I shan't be able to keep you here. You'll have to be put under restraint."

James was smiling and thinking, "You wait! You wait!"

"You've no idea of the trouble you've caused. There's poor Millingdale."

"Ah," said James, "where is the faithful attendant?"

"I've just been on the telephone again about him, and now I'm writing an urgent letter. It just shows what fools people can be! They've shut him up in the County Asylum."

SUCH STUFF AS DREAMS

BY
MICHAEL KENT
ILLUSTRATED BY ALBERT BAILEY

LEAN years have fretted away the glory of Crooked Chantry. The bare rafters of the lodge rake the sky. A farm gate swings where I recall wrought iron and fine gold scutcheons, opening on a drive of rhododendrons, when my great uncle Samuel used to take me to call on Wilfred Thicknesse, fifty years ago.

Wilfred Thicknesse was very proud of his lineage and welcomed my old uncle, who, living all his life in Canchester, had had his finger in many queer pies, for his tales of bygone Thicknesses. He set them down in a heavy ledger, with "Thicknesse of Crooked Chantry" in big gilt letters on the cover.

I remember his waistcoat with revers, under-strapped sponge-bag trousers, bushy whiskers and heavy gold watch chain, his manner pompous and bland, as with feet apart on the library hearthrug, a braided smoking cap on his head, he listened to my uncle's recollections.

"Profoundly interesting," he said. "My uncle, Ignatius, preached in the cathedral on the Sunday after the opening of the Great Exhibition. Proceed, my dear Chapman, I am all attention."

My uncle Samuel, eighty years young, spare, dapper and horsey, conned the topaz of the old, pale sherry in his glass, rubbed his chin and resumed.

"I've reason to remember it, Will, for his cousin was in my house with a broken head! Put his horse at Broad Oak railway crossing gates a night or two before and came a cropper. Tight as a fiddle string he was at the time."

"Tut, tut," said Wilfred, irritably. "Do you recall the text of my uncle's sermon?"

"I don't," said my uncle. "Wasn't there. I'd gone to Paston with Lord Granville that day on Dick's business. Thick as thieves they always were."

"Naturally," said Wilfred. "The families were close friends long before my father married Lady Charlotte. May I know what business of my relative took you to Paston?"

"Arranging for Dick to slip across the Channel," said my uncle. "He'd outrun the constable, ye see, Will. The bailiffs were after him."

"Ha, hum," said Wilfred, with distaste. "No credit to our family I fear."

"Depends how you look at him," said my uncle. "He had his points. Brisk enough with a keg, whether to run it past the preventive or empty it once it was run. Many a night he and I——"

Mr. Wilfred's lips drew tight.

"Richard is dead," he said shortly; "therefore he has a halo, but 'handsome is as handsome does,' Chapman."

"H'm," said my old uncle, thoughtfully. "Your brother Richard was careless of his reputation. Things got fathered on to him that he never sired and it did not worry him."

"What do you mean?" asked Wilfred, uneasily.

"Oh, this and that," said my uncle airily. "If you had my memory, Will, *you* wouldn't need to ask."

"This is idle," said Wilfred, with dignity, taking off his smoking cap. "It's tea time. We'll join the ladies, Chapman."

Usually I found the drawing-room pleasanter. Mrs. Wilfred, plump and comely, made much of me, and her mother-in-law, Lady Charlotte, I found kindly in spite of her deep voice and austere appearance. If I placed her footstool for her, as I had been taught to do for my rich Aunt Clara when she called, she would growl, "Thank you, little boy. Manners make the man. Find him a sugar plum, Alice."

That day the decent ritual of tea was disturbed.

Miss Julia Fielden was one of the party. She had come over from Mill House, which was nearby. She was tall and slim with a rather sad smile and caressing voice. She was often at Crooked Chantry.

Mrs. Thicknesse questioned the danger of three lumps of sugar to a small boy's teeth.

"Dear Richard took four," said Julia Fielden, "and he had perfect teeth."

"Then Mick shall have four," smiled Mrs. Thicknesse, "for poor Dick's sake."

Mr. Wilfred, standing on the hearthrug coughed sharply.

"In view of my lamented brother's eccentricities, my love," said he, "the precedent is hardly to be——"

"Wilfred," said his mother, in a quiet voice that yet seemed to shake the lustres on the chandelier, "you forget yourself. Your brother died like a Thicknesse. I must ask you to respect his memory."

There was an icy stillness till Miss Fielden tweaked my ear. "Let's go and see the thrush's nest in the garden, Mick," said she.

That was better than four lumps of sugar. I went gladly.

At the corner of the lawn Miss Fielden dabbed an eye with a lace handkerchief.

"Have you got a fly in your eye, Miss Julia?" I asked.

"Fiddlesticks," she said. "Don't take any notice of it, Micky dear. Come along. We are going to the chapel ruins."

We saw the thrush squabs and a basking lizard and Miss Julia let me climb the mullions of the ruined windows and played hide and seek with me among the laurels.

At last we came to the end of the chapel where a semi-circular box hedge stood around a column which supported the marble bust of a man wearing a military shako.

A stone bench stood before it.

"Let us sit here, Michael," she said, and put her arm round my shoulders. "Isn't that a beautiful monument?"

"Is it a soldier?" I asked; "and did he fight for his country?"

"For something still nobler," she said and read the inscription on the plinth, "'Richard Forester Thicknesse, who laid down his life for his ideals, fighting in America for the Emancipation of Slaves, 1864. Aged twenty-five. Greater love hath no man.'"

"What's a man shapen of slaves, Miss Julia?" I asked.

She told me all about the American Civil War and how Richard, though an Englishman, had heard

"Richard Forester Thicknesse, who laid down

the call and answered it, and how chivalrous he was.

I did not listen very closely. He seemed to have been dead such a very long time.

"Miss Julia," I said, "I know the name of that jammy-looking flower. It's 'love lies bleeding.'"

"It often does," she said, sadly. "Still, I hope when you grow up, Micky, you will be noble and fearless and chivalrous as Richard."

The Thicknesse deed box had been on my father's office shelf for two generations and so what happened at Crooked Chantry always made topic for talk at our table in Towngate.

"The baker's man told cook there is a foreigner staying with Lady Charlotte," said my mother, at breakfast, a month or two later.

"Some pushful Yankee, I'm told," said my father. "He would not have been asked to stay if Wilfred were at home."

"Possibly," said my mother, "he may have known the brother, the one who was killed years ago in America."

"That was nearly a quarter of a century ago," said my father. "A harum-scarum fellow. If they are wise they will let sleeping dogs lie."

"Don't sleeping dogs always lie, father?" I asked.

"Eat your porridge," said my father and added, "'Pon my soul, they don't though. Only lie when they wake up. Not bad that, my dear!"

"Quite a *bon mot*," agreed my mother. "I expect Uncle Chapman will know," she added thoughtfully. "Poor Uncle Chapman has a very lonely life. Shall we ask him to dinner next Wednesday?"

"Certainly, my dear," returned my father.

My uncle came in the next day to make his excuses.

"You are such a gad-about," said my mother, archly, when he pleaded a previous engagement. "Here, there and everywhere. I suppose you are going to meet the American visitor at Crooked Chantry?"

"Mr. Lincoln Broad?" asked my uncle. "Haven't seen him. Met Julia Fielden in the town yesterday. He knew Richard in America. That naturally interests Julia; Lady Charlotte too."

"Poor Julia," sighed my mother. "He spoilt her life. Such a pretty girl she was. She's never given a thought to any other man. I hate to see her grow into a cranky old maid."

"Shouldn't call her cranky," said my old uncle. "Very attractive woman with her lovely white hair."

"A scamp like Richard wasn't worth remembering," said my mother.

"But Miss Julia says Mr. Richard was a noble hero," I protested.

"Little pitchers have far too big ears," said my mother.

"That's right, bup," said my great uncle. "But there's this to Richard's credit. Miss Julia believed in him and what's more, the world's a better place because of it. It made her start our cottage hospital and a whole string of good works."

"When you've been to Crooked Chantry, Uncle Samuel, you will come in and tell us all about Mr. Broad, won't you?"

My uncle straightened his stock tie and picked up his crop and grey bowler.

"My niece," he said, "I'm a cunning old man who has spent his life among hosses and never got into trouble. Know why?"

"You've never really deserved to," said my mother.

"No, not that. That's more than I dare say."

"Then why?"

"Horses keep their own counsel," he said, confidentially. "And I learned the trick from them, my dear."

He took me to Crooked Chantry two days later. We drove out early in the forenoon and my old uncle was rather quiet. He played none of the tricks that made him such a gay and intriguing companion; materialising coins out of the empty air, or my nose, or ears and similar marvels which I held in great respect.

Waiting at the gates for the lodge-keeper he broke his unwonted silence.

"We are such stuff as dreams are made of, bup," he said. "Our little life is rounded with a sleep."

"Is it, uncle?" I queried, understanding nothing at all.

"That being so," he said, staring fixedly at me

So we three set out along the outer wall of the Chantry till we came to the end of the chapel. Miss Julia turned there and stopped

for a moment, "who'd swop a pretty dream for a nightmare? Thank 'ee, Holmes. One gate'll let us through."

We overtook Miss Fielden in a big shady hat with a little basket of needlework on her arm.

"Good morning, Miss Julia," said my uncle. "Jump down, bup, and carry Miss Fielden's basket, like a little gentleman. Mr. Broad still up at the house, Miss Julia?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "Thank you, Micky. Lady Charlotte is so very glad to hear about dear Dick.

"I know, my dear," said my uncle, quickly. "Ask Miss Julia to tell you about Alice and the Cheshire Cat, bup. It's a wonderful story."

Mr. Broad was smoking a cigar in the porch. He was tall and very brown and lean, with a spiked moustache and a goatlike beard. His hair was longer than Englishmen wore it, curling over his collar, and a livid scar, running diagonally from his forehead across his nose and down his cheek, disfigured him terribly.

Miss Julia made the introductions.

"Honoured to meet you, sir," he said, nasally, as he extended a hand to my uncle.

"You knew Richard Thicknesse," said my uncle. "So did I. Taught him to ride and drive. Taught him to shoot."

"I guess you made a good job of it, sir," drawled Broad. "I've seen him handle a shooting iron."

"Have you seen Mr. Wilfred yet?" asked Julia.

"No, ma'am," said he. "The train was late. The carriage waited so long at the depot that we had all retired when he came. He is taking breakfast with Lady Charlotte in her boudoir at this moment."

"He will be interested to hear all about his brother," said my uncle. "He's proud of his family. You must. . . . Why, bless my soul, there you are, Will! You got hung up last night, I'm told. Better have trusted to horse-flesh."

"Last night the fog would have stopped anything," said Wilfred. "Good morning, Julia." He stared woodenly at Mr. Broad. "Good morning, sir. My mother has told me about you."

"Lady Charlotte has been most kind," said Mr. Broad.

"You knew Stanley B. Moon, I suppose?"

"Moon? Moon?" returned the American.

"He wrote years ago, shortly after my brother's death," said Wilfred, drily. "He obtained a con-

(*please turn to page* 17)

siderable sum from my mother for monumental and other expenses."

"Sure," said Mr. Broad. "Moon. We called him Red Gulch Pete."

"Did you?" said Wilfred. "Shall we sit down, Mr. Broad?"

Something tense and uncomfortable had crept into the air.

Julia crossed the hall in search of Mrs. Wilfred.

"Come, bup," said my uncle. "Mr. Wilfred is busy just now."

"Oh, don't go, Chapman," said Wilfred Thicknesse. "I should like you to stay. I don't wish to appear inhospitable, but Mr. Broad will recognise, as we all do, the importance of unimpeachable credentials. I must guard my dear mother's interests."

Mr. Broad waved a languid hand.

"Richard told me so much of his home life that I think I can convince you of our intimacy. There was, I remember his telling me, a saloon in Canchester, called 'The Rose and Crown.'"

"There still is," said Wilfred, distantly. "Doubtless you passed it on your way here."

"There was a barmaid called Lucy Lane, in Richard's time," said Mr. Broad slowly. "Folk used to call her 'Lovers Lane.' Dick did not know her himself, but her alliance with the family. . . ."

"Pity my brother could not find something better to talk about," broke in Wilfred, hurriedly.

"That," said the stranger, with teasing deliberation, "brings us to the question, 'Did he talk about it?'"

Wilfred and my uncle sat up and stared.

"A gun stock in the face," explained Mr. Broad, "if there's force enough behind it, damages it enough to make it barely recognisable. That thought raises interesting conjectures."

"Go on," said Wilfred, quietly.

"Suppose," said Mr. Broad, cupping his chin in his hands as he sat at the table, his lips twisted in a queer hungry grin, "suppose Richard had his own reasons for disappearing and when a clubbed rifle made him difficult to identify, gave him a new personality as it were; suppose he wrote to his family in the name of a fictitious Moon and started a new life on the money he got out of a sorrowing family?"

Mr. Wilfred jumped to his feet.

"Unmitigated scoundrel," he cried. "I don't believe a . . . ."

"Steady, Will, steady," said my old uncle. "Don't rush your fences. This is ticklish going."

"Old Sam's right," said the stranger. "You'd better hear some more. Suppose Richard returned to England. Suppose after twenty years or so he was broke and got into trouble. Such a low fellow might come here and say, 'Give me supplies and get me safely to France. It's better for you than reading about a Thicknesse in the police news!'"

Mr. Wilfred sat staring at him open mouthed.

My uncle rubbed his whiskers.

"A droll situation," remarked the stranger, "if, mark me, it were true! It would take you all your time to disprove . . ."

"This is insufferable," said Wilfred angrily. "I don't . . ."

"Whist!" said my uncle, sharply.

The two ladies entered from the garden and the stranger rose.

"Miss Julia," he said. "You want me to tell you about poor Richard. I am at your service now. Mr. Wilfred and I can have our chat later. Shall we walk together over to the mill?"

"That would be delightful, Mr. Broad," she said.

Her eyes grew very bright. She seemed suddenly much younger.

"I shall be so grateful to you," she went on. "Alice, may I keep Mr. Broad for luncheon?"

"Willingly, Julia dear," said Mrs. Wilfred, placidly.

"And I will carry Miss Julia's basket, like a gentleman," I announced, for I was tired of sitting still, listening to what then did not interest me.

"Whoa, bup, whoa," broke in my uncle. "Miss Julia won't want to be bothered with you."

"Oh, please, Mr. Chapman," pleaded Miss Julia. "Micky and I are great friends."

So we three set out along the outer wall of the Chantry till we came to the end of the chapel. Miss Julia turned there and stopped beside the memorial to Richard Thicknesse.

"I wanted to show you this myself," she said. "It is our tribute to Dick's dear memory."

The stranger's face writhed.

"Hell," he muttered.

She put a hand gently on his arm.

"I am so sorry," she said. "It was unfair to bring you face to face with Richard like that. I ought to have warned you. It has been a shock. Please forgive me."

He laughed harshly.

"Stained glass and Richard seem to have little in common," he said.

They did not talk much as we passed through the Mill House grounds, to the cool dark flagged hall and up a spindly banister staircase to a room I knew afterwards as the Little Drawing-room. It was papered with a rose design and had chintz covers on the chairs. It had a pale green pannelled wainscot and two windows, one giving on to the mill pond and a wide bow window with a seat all round it, looking on to the drive. It had been built out over the old mill wheel.

"Dick and I used to meet here, secretly," she said. "My mother did not approve of our friendship. She said I was too young. Did he tell you that?"

"I guess," he said, "that was too sacred for him to talk about."

"He knew a secret entrance to this room," she explained.

Mr. Broad was standing, tall and rather sombre, by the little fireplace, while Miss Julia sat beside the hearth. I had curled up on the window seat.

"He had learned of it from old Mr. Chapman, who knew a lot about smugglers' ways. 'Keggers' Slink' it was called. When this place was really a mill, years ago, smugglers used to bring their kegs in by this passage in the wall. It opens in the boat house, but not a soul knew of it but Dick and me and Mr. Chapman."

Mr. Broad roused himself.

"That is a long time ago, Miss Julia."

"It doesn't seem so," she said. "I always think of him as near me."

He shifted his position with a start.

"You loved him," he said, rather harshly, "and I guess you were the loveliest thing in his life, but I think you have idealised him, Miss Julia. As I knew him he was rather a rolling stone."

"Your voice," she said, and her eyes were wide with wonder. "It might have been Dick speaking. I—I——"

"Miss Fielden," I piped from the window, "there are four policemen coming up the drive."

Mr. Broad grew hard and watchful.

"What's that, sonny?"

"In the drive," I reaffirmed. "One is going round to the back."

A maid knocked at the door and was bidden to enter.

"Please, miss," she said, "the superintendent from Canchester desires a word with you as soon as conveniently possible. He would not trouble you, he says, but for his duty."

Miss Julia fluttered and went pale. Then, summoning her dignity and strength: "Pray excuse me for a moment, Mr. Broad," she said.

"Certainly, Miss Julia," he said and, bowing, held the door open for her.

As she was passing through she stopped.

"It might amuse you to try to find the Keggers' Slink, Mr. Broad," she said. "No one ever has. The secret latch is so well concealed."

She was facing me then, and I saw her eyes were troubled.

He grew alert when he had closed the door.

"Keep your eyes on those coppers, boy. Tell me what they're up to."

Then he ran to a cupboard by the fireplace and pulled the door open. I heard him cursing as he pushed things on the shelves aside so that he could reach the back.

Suddenly I looked round.

"They are standing on each side of the drive," I said. "The one that came in——"

I stopped in amazement. A whole panel of the wainscot had disappeared, leaving a black cobwebby hole. Mr. Broad was kneeling beside it."

"Coo," I said, "is that the way Miss Julia's hero used to come when they were sweethearts?"

He rose slowly. His eyes were strange, showing a lot of white, and his face was hard, like wood. I have seen that expression since on a man's face when a judge asked God's mercy on his soul. Then he went to the cupboard and put his hand inside it.

"What are you talking about, sonny?" he asked.

"The hole!" I said, and pointed. "It's gone away."

"Rubbish," he said fiercely. "It was never there. You've been dreaming, boy."

The door opened Miss Julia stood there.

"Mr. Broad," she faltered. "It is utterly absurd. These men——"

A policeman interrupted in a loud voice: "John Bingham, alias Lincoln Broad, I arrest you for robbery with violence."

"All right," he said with a short laugh. "I'm sorry Richard Thicknesse kept his secret, Miss Fielden. I've have been glad to know it. Very well, Robert. I'm your man."

Two policemen came in and stood on either side of him and Miss Julia, running to me, snatched me up in her arms and sank sobbing on the window seat.

"It wasn't him," she murmured. "Oh, I'm glad, so glad!"

My uncle came to collect me a few minutes later and heard the news with his usual imperturbable calm. The police, it seemed, had been on their way to the Chantry but had been put on the right track by Holmes at the lodge gate. They had told Miss Julia how the miscreant had been tracked by his scarred face, and was wanted for a score of jobs in London. He had been taken to the still room for interrogation.

"Those poor policemen must have some refreshment after their tiring morning. If you will excuse me, Mr. Chapman," she said, "I will go and see cook about it."

She crossed the hall to the kitchen, for we had come down to the dining-room when my uncle called for me.

"So you've seen a burglar arrested, bup," said my uncle. He had found a dish of walnuts on the sideboard and was cracking them. He could never resist walnuts.

"Yes, uncle," I said; "but he nearly escaped," and I told him about the hole that had come and gone. "Mr. Broad said it wasn't there and that I had been dreaming. But I know it was. I saw it."

"And that's very peculiar, bup," he said, staring hard at me. "A trick of the fairies, I'll be bound." He grew intent on skinning a walnut. "They wouldn't like you to talk about their games, Mick. Wouldn't like it at all. You can be pretty sure of that."

"Oh, I won't, uncle," I said, earnestly.

"Don't, bup, don't." He turned and walked across to the window. "That's a pretty cob in the policeman's trap. We'll go out and look at him."

We patted the policeman's horse. My uncle examined and admired the harness for some minutes and then, returning to the house, we took leave of Miss Julia and drove back to Towngate in time for luncheon.

We were about to finish the meal when Mr. Clayton, father's confidential clerk, knocked at the dining-room door. He never invaded our domestic domain except with news of battle, murder or sudden death.

"Sir," he said, "I have heard a most astounding rumour."

"Indeed, Clayton?" said my father.

"The arrest of which, pardon me, I heard Mr. Chapman speaking to you in the office, has proved abortive," he said. "I am told that on Stone House Hill the police horse reared, overturned the trap and bolted. The prisoner got away and is still at large."

"Those bobbies couldn't drive a towel horse," said my uncle.

"They were not to blame, I understand," said Clayton. "It appears that some sharp-edged nutshells had got wedged in the horse's collar. They naturally caused the horse pain and made it rear. A most unfortunate occurrence."

"Shells?" said my uncle. "Nutshells? Upon my soul, that's very peculiar!"

As executor, I went through Miss Fielden's papers when she died at the ripe age of seventy-eight, after a long and useful life devoted to the good of humanity.

Her principal legacy went to the foundation of "The Richard Thicknesse Scholarship. In view of the constant inspiration I have derived from the selfless example of Richard Forester Thicknesse and the happiness which the memory of our too short friendship brought into my life."

Incidentally, I found an old letter. It had no address, but the envelope, which still encased it, bore a French stamp. It was dated six years after the arrest at the Mill House.

> "Dear Miss Julia," it ran, "This is to tell you that I have been at work in an honest and, I hope, useful capacity for five years now, as clerk in a shipping office.
>
> "Any virtue that there may be in this fact is yours, and due entirely to your loyalty to the unusual qualities of Richard Thicknesse.
>
> "Yours most respectfully,
>
> LINCOLN BROAD."

Underneath it the lady had written,

"Dear Dick, your work goes on."

So, quite plainly, she never guessed the truth.

SHORT SHORT STORY
Complete on this page

The three of them turned round to face him and the wholly unexpected happened

DIAMONDS FOR THE DUCHESS

At least Mrs. Blackie knew why she missed her husband when he crept downstairs to deal with the men at the safe

BY LESLIE BERESFORD

ILLUSTRATED BY EDGAR SPENCELEY

THE BLACKIES, who had been married for some years, and anyhow, were sufficiently well off to please themselves, occupied separate bedrooms. One opened into the other by a door, if required; and this was the case now, so that they could talk to each other as they undressed for bed. Her voice came through to him as he struggled out of a stiff shirt. It was a rich and very nice voice, if tinged with a touch of anxiety.

"It would so happen that the Procters had that hospital call, and we're alone in the house to-night," she was saying.

"Good gosh, my dear, what difference does that make?" he called back. "I was just thinking it quite a treat to have the place really all to ourselves——"

"Henry," she interrupted him seriously, "I was thinking of those priceless diamonds downstairs."

"Don't be silly, Ethel!" he laughed. "They're in the safe till to-morrow, when I'm taking them down to the duchess. I'd no alternative but to bring them here for the night. And, anyhow, who else but ourselves could possibly know they were here? So why worry, angel?"

"I suppose it is stupid," she admitted, laughing a little as well when, pyjama-clad, he passed into her room. He shook her in a playful effort to be stern, which last was difficult, because they were very fond of each other and never quarrelled.

"I should say it was!" he rebuked her. "I suppose, really, it was wrong of me to tell you that I had brought them home. Just—it came to me that, womanlike, you'd never forgive me if you ever found out they'd been in the house and I'd not let you have a look at them."

"Oh, I'd have hated that," she agreed with him.

"Then, having seen them, be a good girl and go to bed without any ridiculous fears. You look tired and ought to sleep like a top."

"I don't honestly think I'll need much rocking, Henry," she acknowledged, laughing and screening a tiny yawn behind a dainty hand, adding, "it's only that—perhaps because the Procters aren't here—the house seems to be steeped in silence. I wouldn't feel so nervous, dear, if you came in with me to-night."

"Nonsense, angel!" he laughed in turn. "I'm not encouraging you in any such childish ideas. We'll leave the door a little ajar as usual."

"By the way," he added, after kissing her, "that reminds me, I've fixed up an appointment for next week with that specialist fellow, who thinks he may be able to do something to cure that—that stupid affliction of mine."

"Affliction?" She stared at him. puzzled, then realising what he meant, a smile broadening her very charming mouth.

"Now it's you who are being childish, Henry!" she exclaimed. "I quite thought you were joking when you first spoke about it. As if it were really serious, my dear!"

"Oh, but it is," he insisted. "So shockingly annoying to other people."

"As if you need think of that, great baby."

"Well, I think it ought to be tried out, anyhow," he observed obstinately, though smiling, and then pointed to a clock. "Half-past twelve gone!" he reminded her. "Time for shut-eye, angel. And—don't have nightmares about people coming after those diamonds."

He had no fears on that matter himself. Indeed, had she not referred to the possibility, the idea would never have dawned on him, so convinced was he that nobody—but a very chosen few—knew the fine stones, being sold to the young and wealthy American Duchess of Warminster, were in his hands at all.

And when, presently, he found that he had meantime fallen asleep, wakening sharply, he wondered at first how that had happened, the night was so still and dark. It was so still that, through the communicating door which had been left ajar, he could hear the regularity of his wife's light breathing in an obviously deep slumber.

Then he heard another sound. It was faint and muffled by distance, as if something had fallen in another part of the house. It came to him that, perhaps, after all, the Procters might have found themselves able to get back to town, even so late as this, and let themselves in. The idea seemed worth investigating and he slipped noiselessly from his bed, letting himself out on to the landing so silently as not to disturb his wife.

From the head of the staircase he realised that either the Procters, or somebody else, had entered the house, for the lights were on in the room which was used as a smoking lounge, where, also, low-pitched voices could be heard in spasmodic discussion. He went on down the stairs, reaching the partly open lounge door.

Unarmed though he might be, it was impossible for him now to turn back. He bore in mind, first and foremost, that whatever happened Ethel was not to be dragged into this. For he knew now not only that his idea about the Procters was wrong, but that these three men were visible proof that he had been wrong about another and very vital matter.

He was careful to close the lounge door behind him before he drew their attention to his presence, for again he did not want his wife's sound sleep disturbed. On the other hand the click of the door latch disturbed the three intruders and they swung round on him in a flash.

A sinister-looking trio, one of them instantly having whipped out a gun, covering him. Almost, because of his own empty hands, he wanted to laugh. But the matter was far too serious. Because they had been gathered round the safe, he felt the more positive that, after all, something had leaked out. In fact, this was established, without being at all explained, by the first words spoken.

"Those sparklers you're taking to a certain duchess," one of the men said, quite softly and insinuatingly. "They'll be in this safe, no doubt. No doubt, too, knowing the combination, you'll be disposed to help us to them, saving yourself and us a lot of trouble. We know that you and your wife are alone in this house——"

"You certainly have me at a disadvantage," he said, and moved towards the safe, which was set in the wall on modern lines. "I suppose I shall just have to do as you say," he added, regretfully.

His fingers, touching the dial, began to manipulate the tumblers, till the safe door swung open and outwards. He had thrust his right hand into one of the partitions, when a great fist grabbed him from behind and he was flung backwards.

"You keep out of that! We'll help ourselves to what's there!' warned one of the men, the three crowding before the open safe.

Which was when the resource of Blackie became more apparent. The right hand, which he had thrust into the safe, now held a small gun, covering their three backs, as his voice informed them. A fact which each could verify by glancing back over his shoulder.

"My great desire is to get you gentlemen out of the house without the necessity of using this fully loaded weapon," he said. "That would cause hurt to one or all of you, for I can assure you that I'm a practised shot. One needs to be in my business, on occasions. Also, it would mean a great deal of needless noise, awakening my wife from a peaceful sleep upstairs, and frightening her."

He had scarcely conveyed this cynical résumé of the situation, with the added request that meantime they should hold up their hands, the armed man dropping his gun to the floor, while the three of them turned round so as to face him, when the wholly unexpected happened. The lounge door clattered open behind him. Without looking round, but reflected by a mirror in a wall, he could see his wife on the threshold in her night clothes, her face very pale, her eyes staring wide.

"Oh, Henry!" she was gasping. "Then you really are safe?"

Seeing that she had somehow, after all, wakened and come on the scene, her unexpected appearance would, he realised, be exceedingly useful. Though now armed, he was still one against three, and he still had to dispose of them. It was indeed a blessing that she had turned up.

"Of course I'm safe, Ethel!" he called to her over his shoulder, while covering his threefold haul, who thought this a good opportunity to be troublesome. "You go and call the police, my dear, while I keep an eye on this little bunch."

"I've already called the police, Henry," she amazed him by answering breathlessly. "They should be here any minute now——"

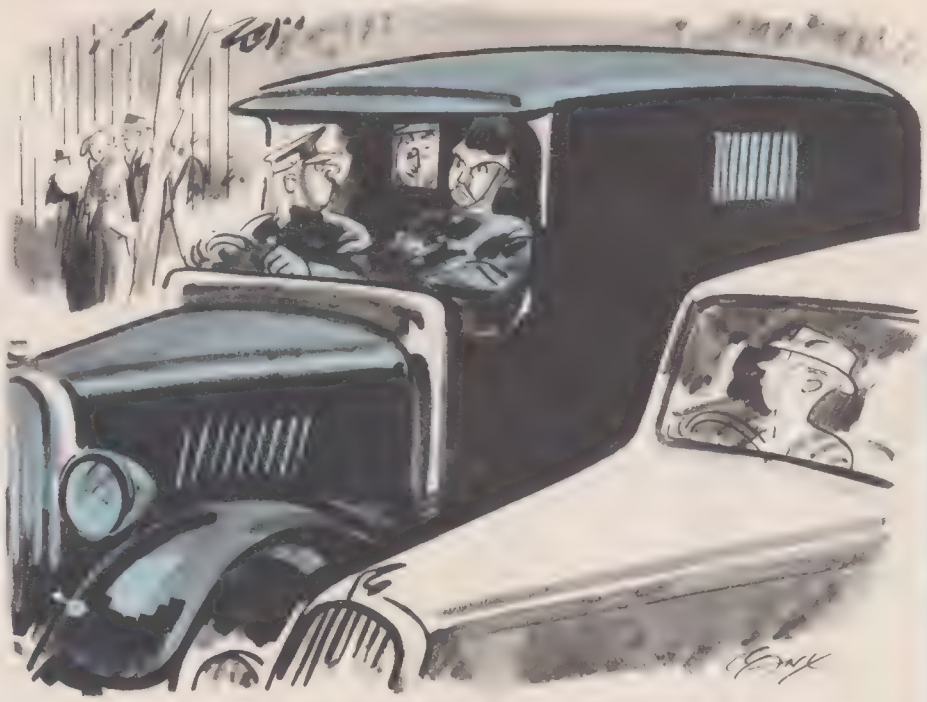
In fact, the shrieking sirens of police cars cut into her very words. The front door opened quickly by her, the hall was filled with uniformed officers. In their charge presently the would-be diamond thieves departed, leaving husband and wife alone together again at last.

"A good job, anyhow, that you called the police so soon, my dear," he was saying, "I certainly hadn't expected that. I'd left you upstairs sleeping so soundly, as I thought——"

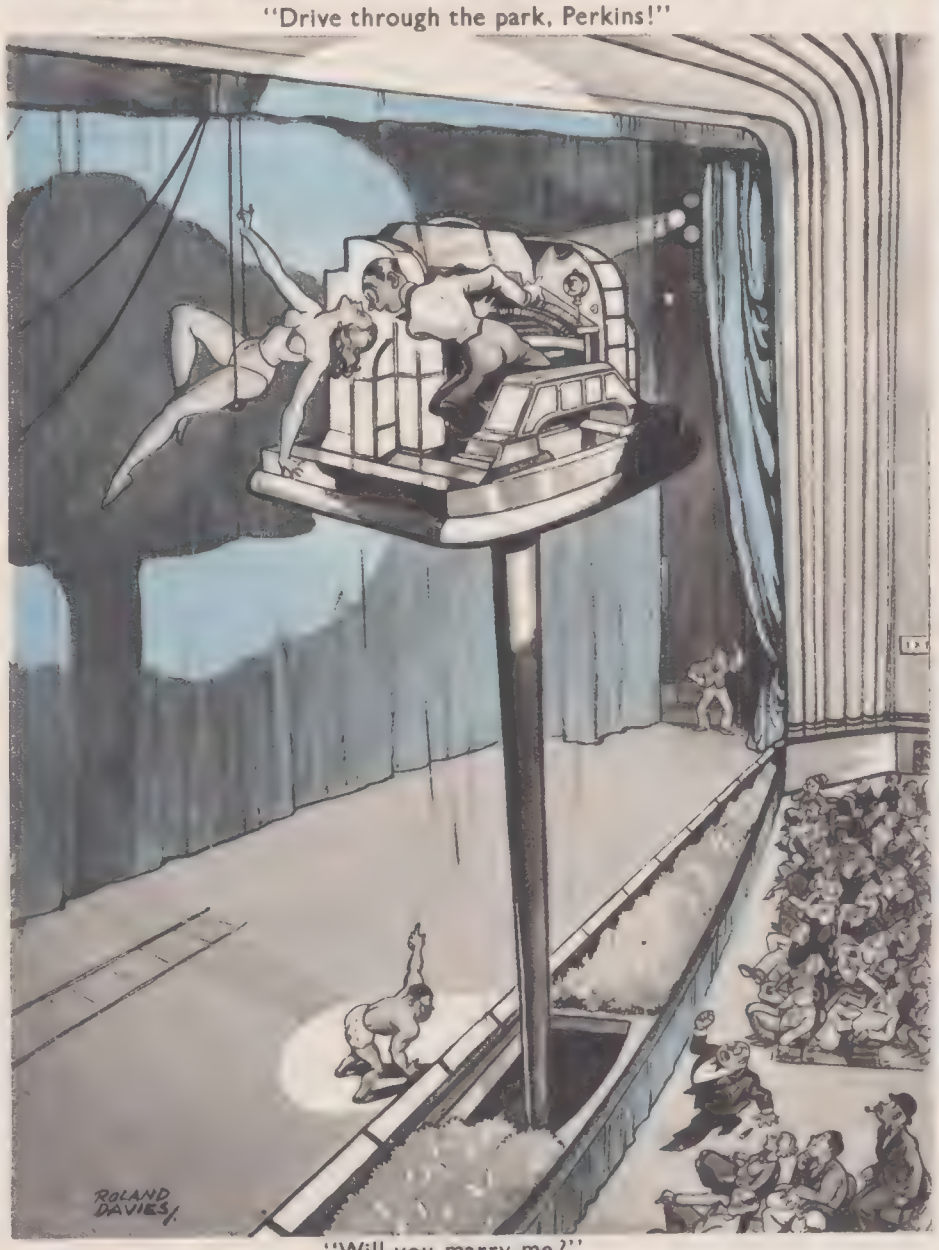
"So I was," she interrupted him, "and I might have gone on sleeping. It's true, I had wakened a bit, but was turning over to drop off again, when—I know quite well you'll laugh at me, Henry"—she was, indeed, laughing herself—"but it really was entirely because of that silly little affliction of yours that I didn't drop off, but wakened properly. You see, for so many years now I've been accustomed to hear you lying there in your bed, snoring away loudly like you do. If I did waken, that seemed to soothe me. To-night, when I couldn't hear a single snore from you, I just came wide awake and had to be up and doing to find out why."

Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW



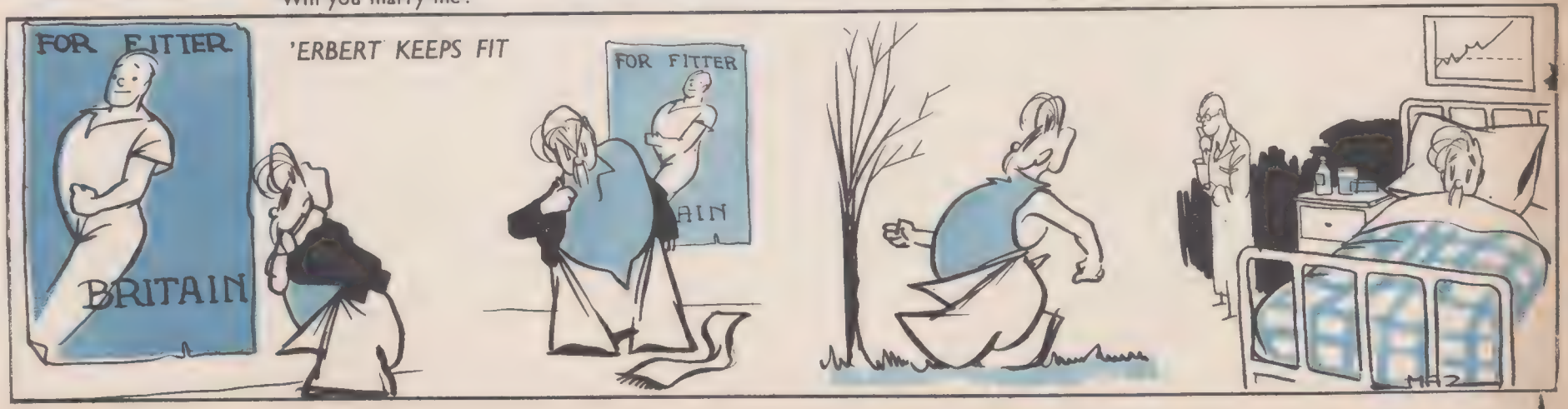
"Drive through the park, Perkins!"



"Will you marry me?"

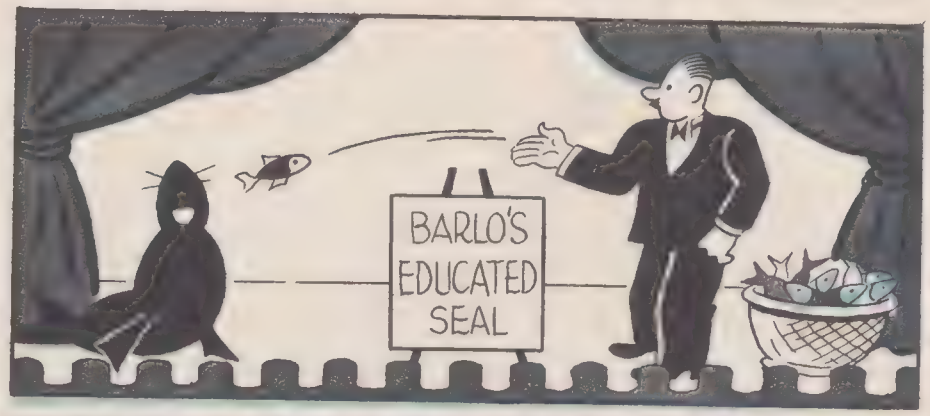
"That's all for to-day, boys—I've got a headache!"

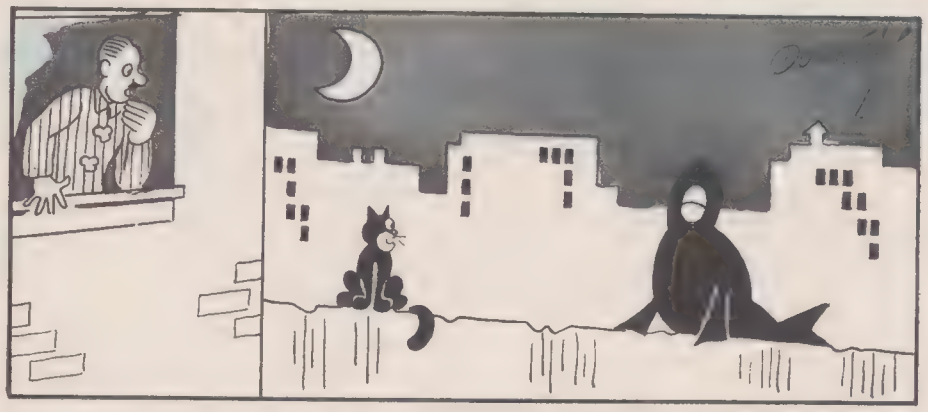
"Baas go sleepum, no likee wakeum!"



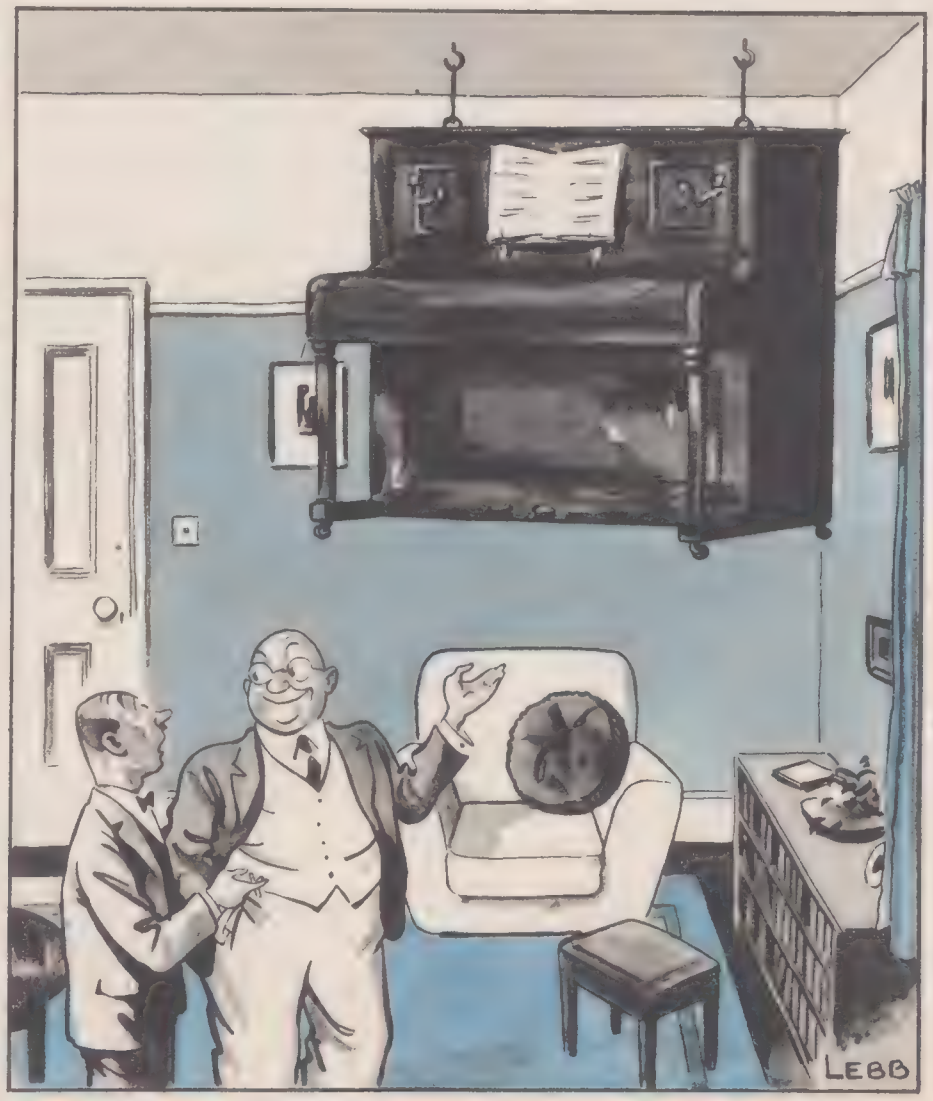
...oker
...ow" Smile Section

"I want to get one that matches it exactly for the other wall of my room!"





"There's something wrong, Mr. Higgs—I've just clocked on and my card says, 'Take things more easily and beware of a dark man!' "



"It stops the family playing it!"

THE PACIFISTER

Continued from page 7

"There bain't a thing more I want," he murmured dreamily.

He sat up alertly at the sound of a shot—it had come to his ears but little louder than the popping of a cork from a bottle. There was another shot and then a confused noise of shouting.

The shouts died down but still Hobden listened and presently he heard the footsteps of a man running swiftly.

A few moments later the young airman broke cover, not fifty yards from where Hobden sat, coming through the bushes a little above the path which led to Sir Harry Peer's house. He was bare-headed, his uniform torn and soiled, and he was bleeding from a wound which creased his forehead. In his right hand he carried a revolver. He turned towards Hobden and halted for a moment.

Hobden thought he was going to fire. Instead the airman laughed, waved his hand debonairly and shouted "Don't forget to trip him up for me, Gaffer. I'll make it right with you next time we meet."

Then he headed up the valley at an easy jog-trot.

John Hobden scratched his head.

"Wonder wot e's been up to? Arter Sir Harry's wife's jewels most like."

He rose to his feet and shouted a "View hallao!"

It was immediately answered by shouts and almost immediately Sir Harry, Colonel Foster and three or four breathless men came from the cover of the gorse bush.

"Where is he, Hobden?" Colonel Foster panted.

Hobden pointed to the airman and a groan of dismay came from the others for it was apparent—even had they not been exhausted—that they could not hope to catch the fugitive.

"We've not lost yet, Peer," Colonel Foster said encouragingly as Sir Harry dropped to the ground with a groan of dismay. "There'll be a squadron of R.A.F. 'planes in the air in no time. He won't get away."

"No. But they'll have to force him down—there's a chance he'll escape. There'll be questions asked in the House and——" He looked up angrily at Hobden. "Why didn't you stop him?" he demanded. "Or did he bribe you not to?"

Hobden ignored the distraught man.

"Wot's the chap done, Colonel?" he asked.

"Tricked Sir Harry into giving him some important papers. He'd have got clean away but Sir Harry's secretary became suspicious and ran after him—the poor fellow got a bullet in his thigh for his bravery."

"Private papers, Colonel?" Hobden asked.

Colonel Foster shook his head.

"No," he said in a low voice. "Government air defence plans. Sir Harry says the safety of England may be at stake, and—what are you up to, Hobden?"

"I got one bullet left, Colonel," Hobden said, loading his rifle. "There's just a chance I can stop him. How far would 'ee say it were to that plane?"

"Four hundred," the Colonel said.

Hobden shook his head.

"I bain't goin' to take no chances, Colonel," he said. "Four hundred yards you reckon. I'm thinkin' it be nigher six hundred. But I got to be sure."

Standing erect, his heels together, Hobden looked towards the 'plane, ignoring the airman who, as if conscious that the others had given up the chase, was now proceeding at a leisurely walk—or it may have been that he was exhausted too. Keeping his eyes steadily on the 'plane Hobden lowered his head until the focus of his eyes, the brim of his hat and the 'plane were in a straight line. Then, not raising his head, or shifting his eyes he pivoted in his tracks until he was looking down the range. An imaginary line drawn then from his eyes to the brim of his hat and extended, touched the ground midway between the butts and the two hundred yards range.

He grunted with satisfaction. Having made of himself a "depression range finder," he now had the distance the 'plane was from where he stood.

"One from eight hundred leaves seven," he muttered and adjusted his sights to that range.

"Hurry, man," Sir Harry urged as Hobden got slowly down to his favourite firing position. "There is no time for grand-stand play. Stop that fellow and you can name your own reward."

John Hobden spat phlegmatically.

"It's a hard shot, Colonel," he said, slowly. "I may miss. An' if I don't—it'll be mortal like murder."

"A legal one, Hobden. You don't have to worry about that. Even if you kill him, you'll be perfectly justified."

Hobson sighed: "It goes against the grain, shooting a man in the back. Besides, he were a pleasant spoken chap," he thought. "But the Colonel—he didn't have no doubts. And this be a pleasant land an' if 'tis in my power to help keep it safe, w'y——"

Hobden's rifle came up to his shoulder. His cheek cuddled lovingly against it, he exhaled deeply. The muzzle wavered slightly as, with wide open eyes he searched for his target. Then, when it seemed to the listening men that they would scream with the suspense, a sharp report broke the tense silence and the bullet was speeded on its way.

Hobden lowered his rifle and seemed to follow the course of the bullet with his eyes. They all tried to do that. And they saw the brave youngster who had dared much for *his* country leap up into the air and then fall into a huddled heap. They saw him stagger to his feet then drop again. This time he did not move.

"Good work, Hobden," Colonel Foster said quietly.

"I hope you'm got the right on it," John Hobden said sadly. "This bain't the day or the place for a killin'."

He sat there rather despondently, running his "pull-through" down the barrel of his rifle again and again.

He was still there when the others had reached the 'plane and gathered excitedly round the airman. He saw them improvise a crude stretcher and gathered from the care they took that the man was not dead. He was glad of that.

Presently he was joined by his old crony, Joe Crossley.

"Wot's all the rumpus about, John?" that man asked excitedly.

John Hobden rose to his feet.

"I just saved England, mate," he said.

"No! Wot again? But serious, John. Wot's all them chaps doin' up there? Been another o' them 'plane's crashin'? And wot were 'ee shootin' at?"

"'Smatter of fact, Joe," John Hobden said, "I've been shootin' game in the closed season, like, an' it don't sit right on my stummick. Come on. A pint—no, a quart!—o' old 'll set me up. I'll tell 'ee all about it as we go."

A MAN "AT HOME"

by A. C. BARRETT

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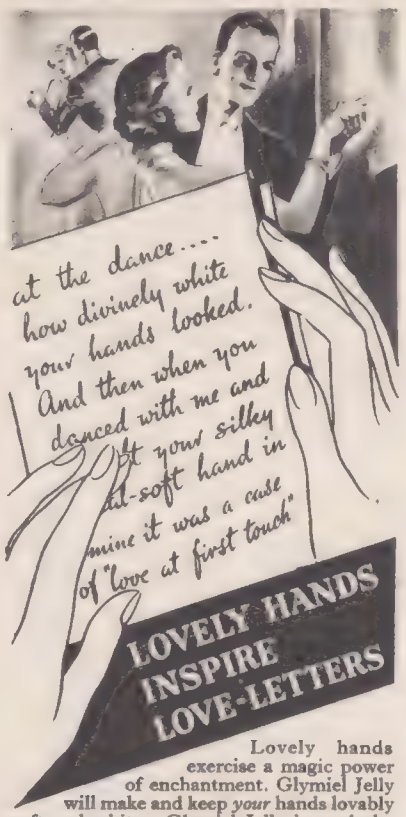

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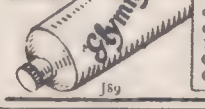

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YOUNG LOVE IN A RING

Showing the transformation of a girl, from an "adventuress" into a sweetheart, in the searing flame of an adventure that nearly made her an angel

BY GEORGE MANNING-SANDERS

ILLUSTRATED BY SEABRIGHT

"AND what really terrified me," said the girl, earnestly, "was that he kept on saying something about an experiment."

Philip Warner looked fixedly at the girl sitting opposite him in the kitchen of the solitary moorland cottage where he lived alone. Admittedly she was pretty, in a rather unusual way. But what was her little game? Why had she come limping to him with an obviously false story of a strange little man, who accosted her on the moor and so frightened her that she ran from him and sprained her ankle. She had introduced herself as Mary Smith and to his suspicious ears, even her name was unconvincing.

"Now tell me, Miss Smith," he said, placing an ironical stress on her name, "in what way did this man you speak of frighten you?"

"I don't know exactly. He was so peculiar—so ordinary in appearance and so extraordinary in manner. What did he mean by muttering about an experiment? And he never smiled. I walked away leaving him standing as if in deep thought. As soon as I was out of his sight I ran for all I was worth, fell and twisted my ankle. Look, it's swelling now."

Philip glanced coldly at the shapely leg held out for his inspection. He had not had much experience with girls in the twenty-three years of his life, but it seemed certain to him that he had to deal with a dangerous and bold type of young adventuress.

Miss Smith, as if recognising his mild hostility for the first time, tucked her foot round the leg of the cumbersome unupholstered armchair, and continued with less confidence: "Honestly, I *was* terribly frightened of the man. You've no idea what a relief it was to see the smoke rising from your chimney. And directly I got here I felt safe, you are so strong and remind me of my youngest brother. He's a splendid chap and will do anything for anybody."

Philip tried not to return the friendly smile. This, he felt, was putting it on too thick. It seemed quite certain now that the girl was a liar. How closely and almost anxiously she had watched his reaction to the unsubtle flattery. Probably she hadn't even got a brother. But what on earth was her object, what was she getting at?

"Well it is an unfortunate accident," he said, with forced cheerfulness, "and it's time I did something about it. You say your ankle is so painful it nearly makes you scream to walk on it?"

"Yes, and I can't stand pain. You see I've been rather spoilt—youngest of seven and the only girl. You know what that means!"

Ignoring the invitation to be conversational, Philip replied: "It's nearly nine o'clock. In half an hour it will be dark. I'd better be off at once to get a conveyance from the inn."

Miss Smith gasped, her eyes became round, her lips remained open. "What!" she faltered. "Leave me here alone?"

"Yes, why not. I've only two miles to go. I'll be back with a car quite soon."

Miss Smith glanced, shudderingly, towards the door and window. "Suppose he's followed me?"

"That's not very likely," said Philip, with a sarcastic smile. The girl's display of fear was not at all convincing. He felt that it was overdone, a gross exaggeration.

"If only there were a big dog. Have you a dog?"

"No."

Miss Smith rose to her feet, put tentative weight on her ankle and, with a squeak of pain, sank back into the chair. "Look here, you simply can't leave me alone like this," she said, earnestly. "Why can't I stay the night? I won't be any trouble. I'm used to roughing it on Dad's yacht. I could make a snug bed on those two great armchairs. You can lock me in if you like. Come on, be reasonable, there's a good chap. I'm all on edge, don't leave me here alone."

Philip felt a sense of triumph. He felt that he had the situation in hand. "If your ankle is so painful it should have medical attention. The ambulance must fetch you and the police shall come back with me to get particulars of your story."

Miss Smith beat with her little fist on the wide, wooden arm of the chair. "I've told you over and over that I've nothing definite against the man who frightened me so. I very much doubt if I could describe, or even identify him. In all but manner he was so ordinary—so commonplace."

The clock struck nine. Philip said bustlingly: "I'll light the lamp and if you want anything to eat, help yourself. That's the larder door."

"Can you leave me a weapon of any kind?"

The question was so tragically asked, Philip found it necessary to put up a hand to conceal a smile. "Yes, a revolver," he said casually; "six chambered."

"Then load all six and I'll keep it in my hand."

He noticed while he was loading the weapon that she looked pale and that her eyes were unnaturally large and brilliant.

"Are you an actress by any chance, Miss Smith?" he asked, on a sudden impulse.

"I am. Why?" She was no longer smiling; in fact she glanced at him with undisguised contempt.

"There you are!" he said, putting the weapon close beside her. "And if there's any trouble remember to aim low."

"Is anyone likely to come? If so I shall probably do murder."

"I never see anyone here. That's why the place suits me."

As he went down the garden path he

Philip, speaking slowly as if a matter of great importance were on his mind, said: "Since we are lovers and enacting a drama, details are important. Mary should be wearing my ring"

heard some remarks from Miss Smith which he knew would be uncomplimentary to himself; also he heard the two bolts clattered defiantly across the door. Miss Smith was certainly playing her part well.

As Philip strode down over the moors he was aware of a change of humour towards Miss Smith, an intense curiosity to know just exactly what she had in mind. He was a trifle uneasy, too. It was strange that when she recognised that the game was up, as far as staying the night in the cottage was concerned, she had not found that her ankle had sufficiently improved to walk to the inn even with support. Her fear of being left alone had been a magnificent piece of acting. He felt that she might go far in her profession.

To his vexation he discovered that there was no telephone at the wayside inn so that he could not summon an ambulance from the neighbouring town of Moreton.

"And it wouldn't make no difference if you did 'phone 'em," said the lethargic landlord. "The driver wouldn't try for to go over them ruggy old moor paths. What ails your young friend, sir, making so bold?"

"She's no friend of mine," said Philip, aware of the interest the question had roused in the bar. "She sprained her ankle and came to my place for help."

"Rigged out in this newfangled walking gear, is she? And pretty and nice friendly ways with her. Fair hair and nose on the saucy side? I'll be bound it's she who came in here for a snack lunch. Aye, I'm main sorry to know she's hurted. Best thing you can do now, sir, is to let her bide at your place for the night."

"My idea," said Philip, rather pompously, in an effort to neutralise the winks and smiles of the drinkers at the bar, "is to have a car and bring her to lodge with you."

The landlord shook his head. "There's no car nigh. They all be gone into Moreton fair. As for missy bedding here the night: No, she couldn't. All my womenfolk be traipsed off to Moreton fair; there's no room ready, nor nothing. If missy came to you for shelter, sir—why then, in a manner of speaking, it's up to you."

There came a discreet murmur of approval from the bar. Philip said haughtily: "I shall hire a horse vehicle and drive the lady to an hotel at Moreton."

The landlord chuckled. "The nighest pony and trap belongs to the blacksmith there and he'll not budge till closing time. Moreton is twelve miles, and the hotels like to be chock-full because of the fair."

Philip bit his lip. He could at least scare Miss Smith. It would be amusing to watch her behaviour with a man of the law. "Anyone know where I can find the local policeman?" he asked, generally.

The landlord answered. "Yes, he's been drafted to Moreton for the day. Any message I can give him, sir, he's sure to get a lift back with my people."

"No, thank you," said Philip and, with an uneasy sense of frustration, he stalked out of the inn.

As he went up over the well known ways of the dark moor he relented a little toward Miss Smith. After all she would make copy.

A bright light shone from the curtained kitchen window. He moved briskly up the path and from habit and momentarily forgetful of the bolts he had heard so forcefully pushed into place, raised the latch and entered. The kitchen was empty. He called. There was no reply. While the clock on the high mantelpiece ticked away a minute he stood foolishly. Why had she gone? Yes, and by Jove she had taken the revolver! Was she just a common crook then and had all the make-believe been a cleverly worked up ruse to get him out of the way? He saw with relief that the valuable old china ornaments stood in their usual places on the high mantelpiece. He remembered the money kept carelessly in an unlocked drawer of his bedroom. Electric torch in hand he made a leap to go up the twisted stairway. His foot was on the bottom step when an adroitly delivered blow knocked him senseless.

When he came round he was sitting in one of the oak chairs in the empty lamp-lighted kitchen. He was first aware of dull pain in his head and then a curious restriction of his limbs. Amazed, he saw that his elbows were swathed in cotton-wool that had been used in the packing of ornaments when he came to the cottage, and over the cotton-wool and embedded into it a length of clothes line bound each of his arms to the back of the chair. In a similar manner each ankle was padded and tied to a leg of a chair.

This he thought, could only be the work of Mary Smith, either in malice or as an elaborate practical joke.

The explanation relieved him. Smiling he shouted: "Well, what comes next, Miss Smith?"

He was just going to shout again when the door opened slowly and a little man, a stranger dressed in grey, with grey eyes and expressionless face, stood there, so still he might have been graven in wood.

Without conviction Philip said: "You are just in time to free me. A young friend of mine has been playing a prank."

"No. I did it. I need you for an experiment," said the little man, advancing into the room with a stealthy, gliding movement.

Philip gasped. Then this was the man Miss Smith had spoken of and she had not exaggerated. There was certainly something sinister and repellent about him. Probably he was a lunatic, and this watchful quietness meant that he would be particularly dangerous.

"An experiment, eh?" said Philip, boisterously. "Tell me all about it before you begin, there's a good fellow."

"I'd like to. By the way, my name is Harold Tuke. I know yours, Mr. Warner. I've been taking the liberty of looking through some of your papers."

"The devil you have," cried Philip, indignantly. And then feeling that the madman must be humoured, he laughed and added. "Of course, if your looking through my papers had anything at all to do with the experiment—that's different."

"It had," said Mr. Tuke and he sat down in a massive armchair separated from his prisoner by only the width of the narrow table. You see I'm going to forge

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your name and write a letter which you are going to leave behind."

"Leave behind?" spluttered Philip, "are you going to take me away then?"

"No, not take, but send you away, on the longest and most final journey."

Mr. Tuke was leaning forward, his small grey eyes seemed to become larger and then smaller to the amazed Philip and he realised that the man was trying to hypnotise him. He promptly drooped sleepily.

"Feel anything?" demanded Mr. Tuke.

"Yes," said Philip drowsily, "I'm going numb."

"And is there any change in my appearance?"

"Yes," murmured Philip.

"Do I look young and handsome? Is there a marked resemblance to yourself?"

"Yes," said Philip, almost too loudly, in his surprise.

Mr. Tuke leant back and mopped his sallow brow. "You are a good subject, Mr. Warner. But the other part of my subject, Miss Mary Smith was difficult. She pretended to be in a trance and when I put my hand on her forehead she bit me."

"And is Miss Smith. . . ."

"Yes, in the little room on the opposite side of the passage. I had to gag her or she would have made a noise when you came in." As he spoke Mr. Tuke slowly drew out the revolver that had been loaded for Miss Smith and laid it cautiously on the table. "I don't like firearms," he said, apologetically, "but this one will be very handy for our little experiment presently."

Philip swallowed twice and, with a great effort, said normally: "You were just going to explain that experiment to me."

"Yes, but your sweetheart knows all about it, she'll be able to explain while I forge that letter. It will be a ticklish job. Your writing, Mr. Warner, is rather characteristic. It will need concentration. I'll have to be alone. I'll fetch Miss Smith."

"But she's not my—I mean I never set eyes on her till an hour or so ago."

"Miss Smith said very much the same thing. I would rather you had been lovers. However, you are very well matched. I've no doubt you would have had a warmer relationship—with time."

As Mr. Tuke glided out of the room Philip strained mightily at his bonds. He stopped when Mary Smith, hands bound and closely escorted by Mr. Tuke, hobbled in. She drew back in consternation at the sight of her bound companion.

"Now, if you will just sit here in this chair opposite your—opposite to Mr. Warner, I'll fasten you just as I have him, only without cotton-wool—it's not necessary with you, as I explained just now."

"What's it all mean?" whispered Philip, hoarsely, directly they were alone in the kitchen.

"He's mad," said Mary, "he's gone crazy on hypnotism and thought transference and all the rest of it. He's been telling me his life history. He's never once felt love or even warmth for anyone. Now he's got it into his head that because he has hypnotised us he can kill us and our spirits will go into him and then he'll be able to feel love."

"Ghastly, we mustn't give him the chance. What has the letter to do with it?"

"He's going to copy your writing and leave it for the coroner. It will explain that we have been lovers in secret for a long time. This evening we had a quarrel and, in a mad fit of jealousy, you shot me and then yourself."

"But he's sure to be found out and hanged."

"He's worked it out fairly well. Cotton wool is used on you so that there shan't be any mark of the rope. I shall stay bound. He must be hypnotic, or perhaps it was because I was half asleep. Soon after you'd gone there was a knock. I went to the door and he took the revolver out of my hand just as if I'd been a child."

Philip pondered. He had heard his father say many times that there was always a way of humouring a lunatic if you gave thought enough. His father was a doctor and should know. "Will you play up to anything I may say?" he asked, eagerly.

"Rather," said Mary, hopefully. "I've got the wind up and will swear to anything."

They were still whispering when Mr. Tuke re-entered with the forged letter. "What do you think of that?" he said holding it out toward Philip for inspection. "You see I've used pencil and a fragment torn from this confectioner's bag. That proves your distraught mind and hides any flaws in my workmanship." He put the letter in an envelope, printed—"To the Coroner" boldly and laid it conspicuously on the far end of the table. The fragment remaining from the confectioner's bag lay between the captives. "We've been talking about your experiment," said Philip, with studied calmness. "Of course you were right when you supposed we were lovers."

"Good!" said Mr. Tuke, rubbing his hands and his lips contorted into the ghost of a smile.

"We think you are making a mistake to kill us separately. There will have to be a temporary hesitation, a delay. The perfect thing would be for us to go out the same instant."

"True," said Mr. Tuke, looking from one to the other. "But how is it to be done?"

Philip, in a slightly quivering voice, continued: "I know of a quarry pool. If Mary and I were to go there and lie under the water in one another's arms. . ."

A swift expression of cunning passed over Mr. Tuke's face, "Your legs might run you away. No, I think I must go on as I have planned, thank you. By the way, you are not left-handed, Mr. Warner?"

"No, why?"

"It makes a difference which temple I shoot you through."

Philip, speaking slowly as if a matter of great importance were in his mind, said. "Since we are lovers and enacting a drama, details are important. Mary should be wearing my ring."

"Have you got one?"

"Yes."

"I'll put it on her finger—after the experiment."

"That would be too late. This is not an ordinary ring; it has been in the family for hundreds of years. It's called 'The Phantom Ring' because if anyone dies suddenly while wearing it, their spirit passes straight to the person who put it on their finger. In token of this it is said the ring fades away till the hand is quite cold, then it reappears. Superstition, of course."

But Mr. Tuke had been listening intently. "Where is this Phantom Ring?" he said, absently.

"In the left-hand drawer of my dressing-table, under some papers."

Mr. Tuke laid down the revolver with great care and with more energy than he had as yet shown, went off on his errand.

Philip then stooped and with his teeth picked up the fragment of confectioner's bag from the table. Straining, he held it so that a corner was over the lamp chimney. Directly it caught alight he dropped it on the cotton-wool protecting his right elbow. Instantly lively little flames leapt up. When the rope was sufficiently charred it broke under the pressure of his scorched muscles. Clumsily, because of stiffness, he cut the ropes at his ankles with a pocket knife and, like a drunken man, lurched here and there to recover circulation before releasing his companion.

"I can't find . . ." said Mr. Tuke pushing open the door of the kitchen and said no more because Philip's erratic blow sent him spinning. Before he could recover from his surprise they had made him helpless with the knotted rope that had been used for their own binding.

Just as their labour was finished, ponderous steps sounded outside and a heavy official pounding came to the door.

Mary limped to the window and whispered: "It's a policeman."

"So much the better; he'll take this fellow off our hands," said Philip. "But we'll hide the forged letter and the revolver or the story will be in all the papers."

The policeman entered, looked again and again from Mr. Tuke to a small photograph in his hand.

"It's 'im, or I'm a nigger," he said, at last. "We've been looking for 'im on the moors this week past. Name of 'Arold Tuke, escaped from a medical institution."

"He's your man all right," said Philip, "take him away."

"I must have a few particulars, if it's all the same to you, sir," said the policeman, on his dignity.

Philip told a cock and bull story of how Mr. Tuke had come to the cottage and been such a nuisance that they had to tie him up.

"You needn't have done all that much, sir," said the policeman reprovingly, "'e's 'armless enough."

"Not always," said Philip, slowly.

"Then I'll put the bracelets on 'im and leave 'is legs free to walk."

At the door, as he was being led away, Mr. Tuke turned and said, sorrowfully: "If only you hadn't mentioned the Phantom Ring, Mr. Warner, our experiment would have been over. Good-bye."

While their footsteps receded, one heavy, the other light, Mary looking at her finger speculatively said: "I'd like to see that ring."

"It doesn't exist—I invented it on the spur of the moment," said Philip.

"It seemed so real I almost felt the cold touch of the gold."

"Perhaps you will one day, Mary. I mean . . ." He paused in confusion.

"You mean what?" said Mary, looking at him steadily.

"Oh, just nonsense," said Philip.

"Is love just nonsense then?"

"No," said Philip, shyly reaching out a hand to her. "I'm beginning to realise now, love is all that counts."

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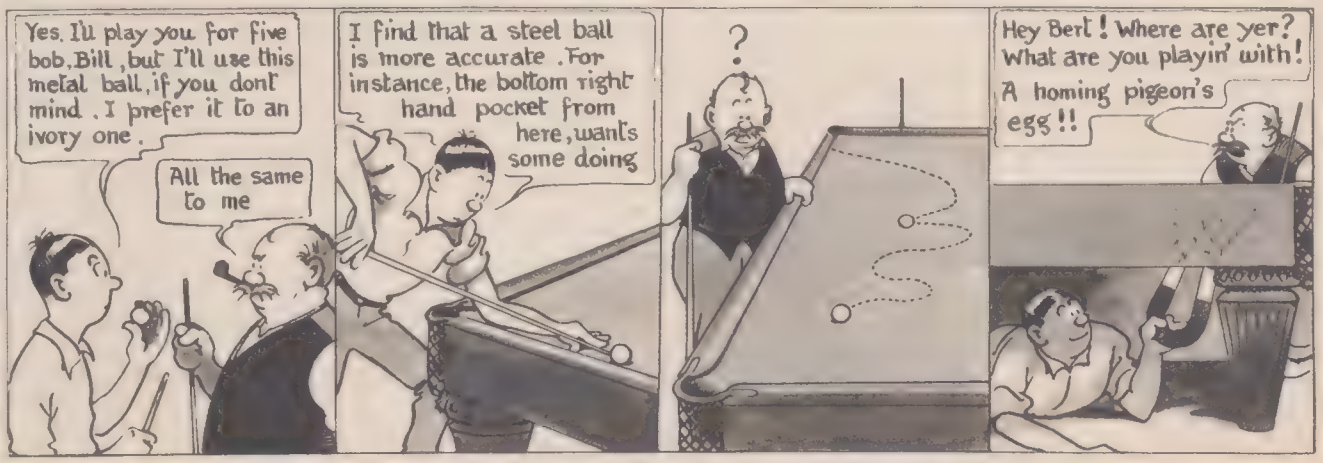

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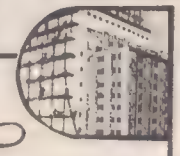

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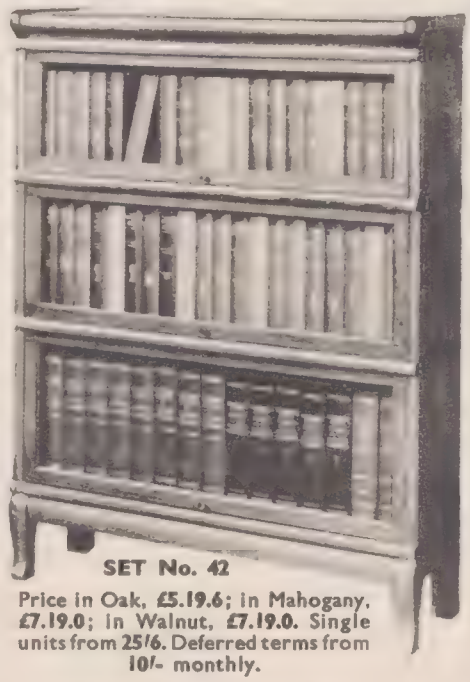

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Miss Virginia Hall

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BACK-CHAT

THE boy-friends who complain already that they have difficulty in recognising us when we suddenly take to a new style in hats, or eyebrows, will probably give the whole thing up before long.

For it seems as though soon we may not know whether we are coming or going.

Recognising the girl-friend face-on is going to be one thing, but when she turns her back you'll be surprised, for, according to dress-designer Adrian, backs are much more important than fronts this season. He gives no special reason for this, save that fashion creators have just decided to be "different." Trimmed coat and suit backs are the result.

One outstanding creation of this type, worn by Joan Crawford in the film *Mannequin*, is fashioned from soft black wool; it has all the appearance, head on, of a severely tailored, box-jacket coat, topping a slim, pencil silhouette of a skirt.

But that's all you know! The back of the jacket is all fur, and the effect is that of a complete fur coat. The skirt hemline also has trimming, quite unlike the front, and even the back of the smart, high-crowned hat is of a soft fox pelt.

Even a negligee is capable of this trickery. Miss Crawford wears one fashioned from silver lamé. Here you find lines of extreme simplicity in the front. No fuss, no furbelows. But just glance into the full-length mirror reflecting the other side of the figure, and prepare yourself for a shock.

There isn't a scrap of fox fur to be seen on the front, yet the back fairly drips with it.

Fur bands the flowing hemline, fashions a deep sailor collar and forms a back belt.

There are numerous creations of this type in *Mannequin*, worn not only by Joan Crawford, but also by some of the models in the fashion parade scene.

Instead of fur, some of the back trimming consists of intricate embroideries, steel-beaded medallions or pieces of lace.

For evening jackets and capes there are masses of lovely silk flowers on bases of net.

★ Reminded of the approach of Pancake Day by having pancakes—and what pancakes!—at one of my favourite restaurants the other day, I thought I ought to try to help you solve the annual problem of making the traditional Shrove Tuesday dish a little different.

At the top of the page there is a recipe for good plain pancakes, and this is what I was told when I asked Leoni, the *restaurateur*, to let me into some of his pancake secrets.

To make what he calls "Crêpes Benevento," the pancakes should be cooked in the usual manner and then a tablespoonful of thick cream is placed in the middle, the pancake rolled, sprinkled with sugar, and then served with some Strega liqueur poured over it.

For "Crêpes Georgette," chopped pineapple is placed on the cooked pancake, which is then folded in two, placed on a serving dish, covered with Kirsch, ignited and served flaming. And, last but not least, "Crêpes Suzette." Prepare in a dish one ounce of butter, a dessertspoonful of powdered sugar, the juice of an orange, a measure of Grand Marnier, and mix well together.

On a silver pan on the stove allow a knob of sugar to melt and then pour over it the mixture that I have just explained, allow to boil, and while boiling soak the cooked pancakes in it singly and then fold each one in four.

When the pancakes have been thus treated, arrange together on the same dish, sprinkle with sugar, pour a measure

Virginia Hall's Page

Prescription for Pancake

PANCAKE TUESDAY is a very happy day—especially if you make them this way.

Sift ½ lb. of flour and a little salt into a dry, warm basin. Make a well in the centre of the flour and drop in the yolks of two unbeaten eggs and 1 tablespoonful of milk. Stir the flour gradually into this liquid, adding a little more milk, but being careful not to thin the mixture too quickly, and keep it perfectly smooth.

When you have added ½ pint of milk in this way, beat the batter well with a wooden spoon until it is a mass of air bubbles. Then add another ½ pint of milk and let the batter stand for 2 hours. Just before using it, stir in lightly and quickly the stiffly whisked whites of the eggs.

Now melt about an ounce of butter in a perfectly clean frying pan, allowing it to heat until it smokes faintly. Then pour into the centre of the pan about 1 gill of the batter, so that it covers the pan.

Leave it undisturbed for a minute or so until it is sufficiently set to allow a palette knife to be slipped under it to loosen it from the pan. When the underside is delicately brown, turn it over with the knife to brown it on the other side. Slip it out of the pan, roll it up and keep hot while you fry the rest of the batter. Serve with sugar and lemon.

of brandy over them, ignite and serve.

It makes me hungry even to write about them!

★ There's really no reason why you should have the four walls of your kitchen painted the same colour. This applies to all rooms, for that matter, but a kitchen lends itself more readily to a little free-painting!

A girl I know who has just married and is living in a charming new house, thought this when deciding on interior decorations. She told the decorator that she wanted three walls painted white and the other scarlet. And was he staggered?

But now it's done and the kitchen furniture is all in place he admits that "It's a nice job of work."

Her white refrigerator and gas stove stand against the red wall, and also she has had the windows picked out in scarlet and the handles of the kitchen cabinet, too.

Scarlet and white draughtboard cotton curtains and a high kitchen stool painted bright red add the finishing touch to a room that is clean and cheerful.

★ Some time ago I found a pair of gloves; they were white hogskin, obviously unworn and really rather nice. I told the people at the restaurant of my find, and left my name and address so that, should the owner inquire about them, she could get in touch with me. But I heard nothing further, so I "won" a perfectly good pair of gloves.

But it's not the gloves I want to tell you about. Those gloves were perfumed with a most elusive scent, and even now after they have been washed several times there is still a faint perfume clinging to them. I couldn't place that scent, and I even took the gloves into a shop and asked the young man behind the counter to sniff at them to see whether he could help me. I asked several friends, but it was no good, the perfume eluded me. It was most annoying. I liked it and wanted more of it.

Now I've tracked it down, and at the same time found three other most attractive perfumes of the same family. The original is called *Je Reviens*, and, as I have since discovered, is really one of the most exclusive perfumes. Like the others, which are called *Projets*, *Dans la Nuit*, and *Joyeux Retour*, it was created by a famous dress designer, an Englishman, with a salon in Paris.

He was on holiday in Italy and one star-lit evening, while wandering in the scented gardens of his villa he decided to create perfumes as well as dresses, to see whether he could match the beauty of the flowers. It really was an inspiration, for the perfumes he makes are most lovely.

I admit they are expensive, but they last. Only a tiny drop lasts for days.

Also, it stays just as fresh and lovely as it was the moment you first used it. *Dans la Nuit* was actually the first perfume this famous *couturier* made, and, remembering that perfect star-lit night in Italy, he had it put up in *flacons* as blue as the night sky with little stars scattered on it.

You can buy the smallest sized bottle for 5s., and if you are interested and would like one send me 5s. and your name and address in an envelope marked "Stars." I will have a bottle sent to you post free.

But don't put it on any gloves you mean to leave lying about. For your sins may find you out!

★ Ever heard of spattered floors? I hadn't until I went to a birthday party the other day given by a friend for her small daughter. I was introduced to this new kind of floor in the nursery, and it really is rather attractive and does not show the dirt nearly so much as a plain linoleum.

When my friend, Marjorie, first instituted the nursery she had plain blue linoleum. As this was before Jill was born, she thought she ought to be on the safe side and have the walls distempered apple-blossom pink. Well, now that Jill is three, the linoleum has lost its first freshness, so Marjorie thought of a plan to give it a new lease of life. She just spattered it with pink paint!

She started at the end of the room farthest from the door, dipped a stiff broom into the pink paint, and tapped the handle of the broom with a good strong stick. This sent spots over the floor, all in a haphazard way. That was that! And very attractive, too.

★ I'm not really supposed to act as a go-between for readers. Once before only have I tried it, and that was the time I asked for readers to write to a girl who had asked me to put her in touch with a pen-friend. I had fifty replies that time, which made me realise that I was really doing a good turn to lonely people.

Well, I've just received another request, this time from a sixteen-year-old girl living in Durban, South Africa. She asks me to find some pen-friends for her in England or Scotland. She would like them to be her own age or a little older. So what about it? I leave it to you.

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in this page please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help in such matters

The lightest of truffles hides between layers of delicious nougatine in Truffle Nougat. It's just one of the twelve luxury centres in Black Magic Chocolates.

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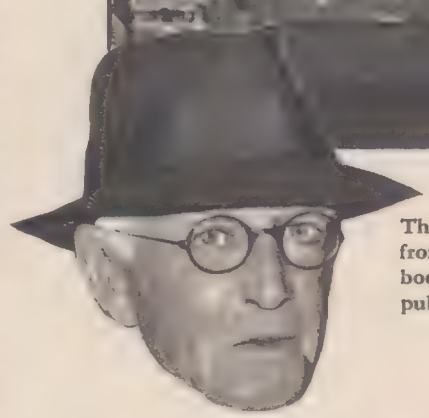
By two o'clock all my part of Málaga was in the possession of the Italian army. There was not a Spaniard among them and there was complete order

MY MÁLAGA ADVENTURES

TAKEN OUT TO BE SHOT



This is the last of four articles taken from Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell's book, "My House in Málaga," recently published by Faber and Faber (8s. 6d.)

Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, 73-year-old biologist and former chief of London's Zoo, retired to peaceful, sunny Málaga only to find himself thrust into Civil War, his lovely white villa and its fragrant garden an oasis in a bomb-swept land. When Government troops take possession of the city he shelters the family of a neighbour, aristocratic Tomas Bolin, who is imprisoned by the local authorities. Sir Peter agrees to look after Doña Mercedes Bolin, her five daughters and their grandmother and watch over their unoccupied mansion. Later the mansion becomes a hospital for wounded troops, and Tomas Bolin, whose health has failed during his imprisonment, becomes one of the patients. Eventually Sir Peter manages to have the grandmother and the five daughters taken aboard a British ship bound for Gibraltar and Portugal, and later he smuggles Tomas Bolin and his wife on to a British destroyer, which carries all three to Gibraltar. Sir Peter returns to England, but after a few months he decides to go back to Málaga. "It was my home," he says, "and I had come to love and respect the people who were possibly going to face more terrible things, and I was unhappy about my flowers and garden." He finds the city still beautiful, even though it has been shattered by bombs and gun-fire—"savage raids with no object except terrorism and destruction." With Arthur Koestler, a newspaper man, he awaits the arrival of the insurgent army when the last of the refugees has left. Lights on the hillside show the Italian army resting before it enters Málaga. . . .

BY SIR PETER CHALMERS MITCHELL

NEXT morning, afterani ght in which we both slept well, we went into the garden as soon as we were dressed. The end of the long line of lorries was slowly moving round the corner where the high level of the Granáda road twisted round and downwards and disappeared in the elbow turns by which the road reached Málaga.

A few aeroplanes circled apparently idly, but now and again one swooped downwards towards the Motril road and, from behind the Upper Caleta Hill, we could hear bursts of machine-guns. Now and again an enemy man-of-war crept slowly along the sea, a mile or so off the shore, gliding like a toy ship on a toy sea. They were patrolling along the coast, and occasionally we could hear the booming of their guns.

But there was not a sound from Málaga, or from the surrounding hills. The streets were empty and silent. A last refugee came staggering down the hill, his head bandaged, one leg crippled, but still dragging his rifle which he was using partly as a crutch. He stopped and looked vacantly at us where we were standing behind the low wall protecting the drop of perhaps a dozen feet to the lane. Koestler ran down the steps to him, patted him on the back, gave him a lighted cigarette and a handful of others. There was nothing we could do.

He refused to stay and was hardly able to stagger on. Koestler came back with tears on his face.

"If the poor wretch does not die first," he said, "he will be shot within a few hours. The choice of joining the rebels will not be given to so useless a wreck, and the nearest wall will serve."

A little before noon we heard revolver shots from the Camino Nuevo. I ran out to see what was happening, taking as much shelter as I could. A young officer came into sight from round the corner where the road, having reached the summit, drops sharply down into north Málaga. The houses beside him were some twenty or thirty feet above the level of the road which there passes through a cutting banked by a high wall, broken here and there by flights of steps.

He kept close to the wall, firing into the air every now and again, as though asking for opposition. But there was no opposition. He turned round and waved, and immediately the head of a long caterpillar of lorries appeared.

The caterpillar divided, some, with men and guns, climbed slowly up a half-made road leading to the top of the hill overlooking the harbour; others moved down the Camino Nuevo until the half-mile-curve visible from my villa was filled. The lorries stopped and men swarmed out.

Some climbed on the hill, and formed little camps near the lorries. Another set, in command of a young officer climbed up through my olive grove and settled on a shelf of the steep low hill behind, whence they could have thrown a tennis ball on the roof of the villa.

Then came the rhythmic tramp of marching men, and what seemed one or two regiments marched down my lane in perfect order. I know nothing about the fighting qualities of Italian soldiers, but these were as fine men as one could wish to see. Sturdy, bronzed, perfectly uniformed and booted, every third man or so carrying what seemed to be a Lewis gun; all with metal helmets, an officer marching by the side every few yards.

At the foot of the lane they crossed arroyo and streamed across to take possession of the Caleta. By two o'clock all my part of Málaga was in the possession of the Italian army.

There was not a Spaniard among them and there was complete order. Sentinels were posted a little way from each group, and we heard the clattering of mess tins and the noise of rifles being stacked. Then songs and chatter. They had come, unmolested, through the working-class quarter to the north of my home.

Early in the afternoon the group nearest the villa, just a few yards up the steep slope, began to call out to us: "*Agua; agua!*" I waved to them to come down, and in a few seconds the narrow paved yard behind the the villa was crowded with merry Italians.

My servants were giving them water to drink from big Spanish water-coolers; pouring out water in which they were washing, everyone smiling and laughing. Then I climbed up to where their officer was lying down, but in such a position that he could see that all was going well

He rose and saluted. I found that he could just understand my Spanish and I his Italian. We had cigarettes and we both kept looking at the sea, now blue, with the hills almost mirrored in it.

"Very like my Italy," he said.

"And what a pity there should be war in so beautiful a country," I replied. He shook his head sadly. I had taken a glass and a jug of water with me, and he drank long. He told me that he had not been in bed for three nights.

I pointed down to the men washing, and asked him if he would not come down too. We did so, and they were making way for him when I insisted on taking him indoors, putting him in my dressing-room and giving him a safety razor, soap, and towels.

In a quarter of an hour I went back to see if there were anything he required. I found him clean-shaven and trim, also that he had cleaned and put away the razor, swilled out the basin, folded the soiled towels, leaving the room in as complete order as if no tired man had used it.

He called off his men, shook hands with

me and with Koestler, who had been helping the soldiers, and they went back to their post.

We were both much relieved. Málaga had been captured, but by orderly troops. I drew on my ultimate reserve and we had almost a good dinner and the last bottle of wine. We had a really excellent night. Next morning we were aroused by bugles sounding all round us, choruses and shouting. The Italian soldiers were being withdrawn from their outposts and collecting on the slope just above the Camino Nuevo, near their transport lorries.

On the slope below the road, two of the herds of goats which pass through Málaga every morning delivering milk straight from the udder to the householder's jug, were assembled, and the goat-herds were selling milk to the soldiers. Little groups of Spanish women and children were standing near watching. Pepe's boy had been among them and told me that the soldiers were paying more than the usual price for the milk.

I write of what I saw, but I must have been fortunate in my Italians. A friend who knows Málaga well saw in Turin during last summer a film entitled the *Capture of Málaga*, and recognised the streets and buildings. One scene, on the Antequera Road, showed Italian soldiers lining up a set of Spanish prisoners, most of them peasants, not more than boys.

The officer sprayed the line with what seemed to be a Lewis gun, under the eyes of some Spanish priests. As the lads crashed to the ground, the priests dashed at them, to hold crucifixes to their glazing eyes. My friend said that many in the Italian audience were sickened by this display of Christian charity.

He was a Catholic and his own comment was that the Spanish priests would have to run even faster to save their own souls.

All seemed well, and, after taking our own coffee, Koestler settled down to read, while I myself got out my typewriter and went on with the first chapter of the book I hoped to write on the psychological features of the war in Spain and the events leading to it.

Then we heard bugles again and, on going out, saw that the Italians were getting into the lorries. We watched them for a long time; lorry after lorry was loaded, and then the column slowly moved down the Camino Nuevo, turned to the left at the bottom, leaving Málaga.

We felt almost as if friends had left, a feeling that was more prophetic than we knew. There followed an anxious half hour or so during which Koestler rather lost his nerve and insisted on taking a glass of brandy from a flask he had brought with him. I went out to the front terrace to watch, leaving him on the terrace facing across the arroyo to the Bolins' mansion.

A clamour and shouting came up the Camino Nuevo from its lower Caleta end and soon revealed its cause as a disorderly rabble of armed men, very different from the disciplined Italian troops who had taken the town peaceably 24 hours before.

They collected in a huge crowd just about the place where the Italians had bought milk from the goat-herds in the morning, shouting and gesticulating. I could just see them throw against the precipitous wall on their left, what seemed to be two or three bundles of old clothes, but recognised at once that they were huddled, wounded men.

I feared I was about to see one of the summary executions with which the Rebels celebrate their entry to a loyal village or town, but Koestler appeared behind me, calling out that a car had just gone up the Bolins' drive. I went round with him to see for myself.

"We are both all right now," I said, after a few minutes. "That must be Tomas Bolin himself. I rushed down my garden path, crossed the arroyo and climbed up to the inner gates by the path familiar to me from many dozens of similar rushes made on the affairs of Tomas and his family. He must have heard me, as I drew near the front door, for a tall figure came out pointing a revolver at me.

Tomas Bolin, certainly, but a very different figure from the trembling hysteric I had known in Málaga, or the debonair aristocrat who had come across from Algeciras to visit me in Gibraltar. Booted and belted, in the uniform of a Requeté, completely the gentleman soldier, for whom the toils of the march and the camp were light.

None the less I went up to greet him and he gave me a formal recognition, which I tried to turn into cordiality. The tall young gardener must have followed me across, and came up with a shy smile to welcome his old master.

Bolin swung round, and, pointing his revolver at the man shouted: "Get out of here; I am done with all you and your kind."

Then, turning to me with a savage scowl, or at least the closest imitation that his weak features could assume, he added: "Come and see what your friends have done to my house."

We went into the great hall; the high roof was blackened, the floor-carpet and part of the stair-carpet which I had seen recently protected with sheets of paper, were stained and partly burnt and a heap of ashes lay in the middle of the floor. All I could say was that a new carpet would not cost very much, and that after being used as a hospital, the house would require re-decoration in any case. But I was saddened and surprised.

"Well anyhow your house itself is saved," I said at last. "Let us see whether the rooms where your wife and I, with the help of the anarchists, stored your furniture, are intact."

We passed into the great double drawing-room which had been turned into the chief ward. There was every sign of sudden evacuation; fragments of the last meal on the bed table; sheets and blankets thrown on the ground; here and there a stick or a soiled bandage. And certainly one or two mirrors had been smashed wantonly as if by the blow of a crutch. But the chapel door was still locked, and when we went up to the top of the house we found, also intact, the large rooms in which the rest of the furniture had been stored.

"You see," I said, "that if it had been deliberately planned damage, it would have been easy to set fire to the whole house. Some of these poor wounded fellows, dragged out of their beds to fly for their lives must have lost their heads. And I don't blame them. *Your* friend Merry del Val wrote to the London newspapers after *your* friends had murdered the wounded men in a hospital they had captured, excusing it because 'no doubt they were simply soldiers skulking in a hospital.'"

As we were going down again, we met Tomas's brother who had been hidden, with some others, in the house of a friend close by. I congratulated him on his escape, but he looked sourly at me. I just refrained from asking him if he had found useful a silk dressing-gown of mine I had sent to the house when Mercedes had been taking other clothes for them!

I must have made a mistake in Spanish for Tomas rudely interrupted and corrected me. A very different Tomas. The relations were not becoming more cordial, and I said that I must go back to the villa.

"You have my field-glasses," he said. "I want them back. And you have valises and clothes of mine and my wife. I want them."

"Mercedes and I took the glasses over to prevent them being taken in some of the searches of your house. And perhaps you remember why the valises are in my house? On the morning when I got you away, we couldn't take all the luggage you and Mercedes wanted.

"You can send for them when you like; or perhaps you wish me to carry them over to your house. I know the way!"

I was angry. It was a mistake. But Tomas did not flinch. He said he would send for them.

I went back and found Koestler waiting anxiously. The clamour and the crowd on the Camino Neuvo were greater than ever, and he was sure that our house would be visited. I told him sadly that I had seen Tomas Bolin, that he was in a rage because the hospital patients had damaged his house before their hurried departure on Sunday, and that he was in

(*please turn over*)

LET'S GO ABROAD WITH THE POLYTECHNIC

"This is to be our honeymoon, Commdr. Studd, and we want to find the loveliest place in all Switzerland. Where do you suggest?"

The holiday of your life

WHAT FUN IT IS TO PLAN

What fun it is to plan the holiday of your dreams from among the coloured pictures, photographs, maps and descriptions in the Polytechnic programme. Let us suppose you choose to go to the Polytechnic Chalets, Lucerne.

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Arrived at our lovely 100-acre estate on the shores of Lake Lucerne, you find yourself among a happy house-party. Mr. and Mrs. Bailey, the hosts here, are charming people. Your room is spotless, with box-spring mattress and comfortable eiderdown on your bed.

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Every day something new and exciting is arranged. Perhaps a new exploration across the lake. (Your holiday can include a first-class season ticket on the lake steamers and a ticket on town bus.) Or a wonderful excursion.

UP A MOUNTAIN

What a thrill to find yourself 6,000 feet above a world so beautiful. And what a magic effect the mountain air has.

"Well," I answered, "every part of Switzerland has its own special charm, and, of course, tastes differ. That is why I have included a greater variety of Swiss holidays than ever in my Jubilee programme."

For a lakeside holiday I prefer Lucerne. But isn't that only natural when we have our own 100-acre estate there and run our friendly chalets house-party from Easter onwards, right through the summer? But some prefer to stay at one of the other charming villages dotted about the lake—Vitznau, Weggis, Brunnen or Fluelen. In any case you can get from one to the other as often as you like by using the first-class season ticket on the lake steamers mentioned in my programme.

For real mountain holidays give me the Bernese Oberland, where in addition to our Grindelwald Chalets (where we offer you a house-party holiday comparable to Lucerne) you have a choice of Interlaken, Kandersteg, Thun, Wilderswil and Wengen. Different again, there are the delightful southern resorts—Montreux, Pontresina and Lugano.

I have a resident host at all these centres. Wherever you choose, you will find yourself among friendly people whose aim it is to see that you enjoy the kind of holiday *you* like best. Now get my programme. Every one of its 256 pages contains a new thrill. Just send the coupon and we will put a copy into the post for you.

A HOLIDAY YOU'LL NEVER FORGET

And so your holiday draws to a close. But it will remain in your heart as long as you live. Stories to tell. Dreams to dream. For evermore you will be the richer for your Polytechnic holiday

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uniform and armed and very far from friendly, even to me. I feared there would be no help in him for us.

Koestler assured me that no harm would come to me, but he had not seen Don Tomas! He was very anxious about himself, not that he feared merely being killed, but was sure that he would be tortured. He begged me, if the rebels did come, to try to give him a chance of using the morphia syringe.

Perhaps half an hour afterwards Tomas's messenger came for the field-glasses and the valises of his master. I was in the outside dining-room handing over the glasses and a valise which I had brought down from upstairs, when Lola came running to tell me that a car had stopped below the garden gate.

The *sala* is an oval room with at the inner end of the oval a door opening into a passage leading from the kitchen to the small dining-room, which opens to the outdoor dining-room. At the opposite end of the oval is a large door opening on the terrace in front of the house, from which at one side steps lead down to the garden gate, the chief entrance to the villa.

I came into the *sala* from the passage, and as I entered it three men in uniform rushed in at the front door with revolvers in their hands pointed at me. One of them whom I judged to be in command, spoke perfect English, was tall with a weak face, trying to look resolute. Of the others, one was large and plump, the third, young and almost frightened, whether from fear of what he thought I might be going to do, or of what they were going to do, I don't know. I said:

"You know you have no right to come into an English house, protected by the British flag, and behave as you are doing. Put down those revolvers and have a cigarette and tell me what you want."

The three still kept their revolvers pointed at me, and the English speaker barked out:

"I know all about you; I am not the kind to be bribed by a cigarette. Up with your hands! I've just seen what you and your friends have done to my people's house."

I knew in a flash. It must be, as it was, Luis Bolin, nephew of Don Tomas, press agent and staff officer of Franco, and the special enemy of Koestler as of every British or other foreigner who was not wholly on the side of the rebels, willing to be spoon-fed with propaganda by him.

"Please remember that you are doing a very serious thing in behaving this way to a British subject," I said. "So far as my Government is concerned, you are only rebels, although I've been helping your people."

He flared into fury, but I thought, was just a little shaken and he held down his revolver, the other two, however, not understanding English, keeping theirs pointed at me.

"Much good the British government is going to do you; they know all about you!"

Unfortunately, at that moment there was a noise just behind me, and I saw Koestler dragging a large valise, one of the Bolins' which he had kindly carried downstairs and was about to hand over to the man Tomas had sent. All three advanced a step and now pointed their revolvers at him.

"Who is that man, and what is he doing here? You there, up with your hands and come forward."

"He is the correspondent of a London newspaper, and he is my guest who came to my house, just like your friends, because he had nowhere else to sleep."

"He is a spy; I know all about him. How do you come to know him."

"He is not a spy; he came to me with a letter from a friend of mine on the staff of the newspaper."

"What friend? You are lying."

"Please behave yourself. If you wish to know, the friend was Philip Jordan."

"Philip Jordan? I know all about him, too" (Luis Bolin was a man of clichés rather than of conversation.)

Then the other two standing close with revolvers almost touching Arthur, Bolin passed his hands over him, took some papers out of his pockets and shouted, "I was sure I knew him." Then to the others, he said, "Tie his hands."

Poor Koestler could do nothing except submit, making, however, an energetic protest. Seldom have I been more thankful than when I remembered that on general principles I had refused to let Koestler bring a revolver: the discovery of it would have given them precisely the excuse they wished.

My servants were now standing in horror and fear at the back entrance to the *sala*. Pointing with his revolver to one of them, Bolin ordered her to bring some cord. Then I thought that possibly the presence of Tomas might help; he could not stand by and see us in extreme peril, in the room in which his wife and daughters had been sleeping for many weeks. I called out to Lola to run across for him.

He must have been lurking quite near, for he came almost at once and stood, also revolver in hand, while the two men were binding Koestler's wrists together with a piece of electric wiring. I looked hard at him. He flushed, beckoned to Luis, and they had a few whispered words.

I suppose I owe my life to him; even he could not face having to go back and tell his wife and his five daughters and his mother-in-law that he had done nothing to save "Sir Peter" from being shot. I turned on Luis savagely.

"You are behaving abominably to tie the hands of an unarmed man. I dare you to tie my hands," holding out my wrists.

"I am an officer and have to obey orders."

"I also was an officer in the British Army, and I know about orders. But you can try to be a gentleman."

But that I think was beyond him. Meantime Tomas had slunk away. I asked Luis if I were a prisoner.

"It is necessary for us to take you both away. I am going to lock up your house. We shall come later on to search it."

The two servants were ordered to go. I insisted that they must be allowed to take their personal clothing and the poor meal that was cooking on the kitchen stove. The villa was locked up and Koestler and I were ordered to go down to the waiting motor-car. Koestler was put in the front seat, his hands still tied, between the armed driver and the younger officer who still had a revolver in his hand.

I was placed uncomfortably in the back seat between Luis Bolin and a fat man, each with revolvers in their hands. And so I left the villa, perhaps for the last time, the garden drenched with the scent of jasmine, the bougainvillea hanging down in purple glory; the servants, as always when I left, grouped at the top of the steps, but this time sorrowfully.

We drove up the lane, past my garage, the doors of which were still locked (the keys were in the villa where I had left them on Sunday morning,) and turned down into the Camino Nuevo. As we reached the first wide curve, the car stopped and was at once surrounded by a mob in untidy uniforms of all descriptions, amongst which the requeté caps were the most striking.

They peered into the windows, yelled "Reds," brandished weapons, shook their clenched fists. No order, no discipline. Simply a herd united by ferocious glee. Against the wall to the right I saw the men I had seen thrown there in the morning, still as huddled bundles, but whether dead or still alive, I do not know.

Clearly an execution ground. Luis Bolin got out and an officer came forward and they talked for some minutes. I expected that at any moment we were to be dragged out and shot, and I still think that that was the prepared plan, but something, possibly the presence of Tomas, had interfered with it.

There could be no doubt about the intention to be rid of us, and no one except they themselves would have known what had happened. A couple of extra unidentified bodies are not noticed in the middle of wholesale executions, and in a time like that the disappearance of Koestler and myself could have been explained in many ways.

Presently Bolin came back and to the disappointment of the rabble, the car drove off with us, down the Camino to the main street, and so along to the centre of the town.

The car stopped at a large building between the Alameda and the market. Its doors were closed, but sentries were pacing in front. Bolin and the fat man got out; Koestler, his wrists still bound, was made to stand up outside and was photographed from every point of view. Then he was ordered back into the car.

I was told to stay in the back seat, both of us still guarded by the armed driver and the younger man who kept his revolver in his hand. I lighted cigarette after cigarette and gave them to Koestler, and also got the two guards to take one each. I suggested that it was nonsense for them to keep Koestler's wrists bound, and showed them a red, raw mark where the wire was chafing.

The driver was prepared to agree, but the other said that he could not disobey orders. We talked in English, Koestler, in the kindest way, continuing to say that he was sure I, at least, was safe. I did my best to comfort him, but I was terribly anxious. We waited and waited. The street gradually filled with civil guards, requetés, and nuns and priests stalked about, all having come in with the troops or having emerged from where they had been sheltered.

The shops were still shut, and I saw my own grocer standing in front of his shuttered windows, arguing excitedly with two or three guards. He must have seen me, because the car, with two guarded prisoners, was conspicuous, but I took care to avoid his eye in case of compromising him.

I remembered that I had passed through the same street weeks before, in charge of Red militia, who, however, were chatting and jesting with me, although we were on the way to the Gobierno Civil to have my identity verified.

It was now two o'clock; we were worn out and hungry. Bolin and the fat man suddenly reappeared. We were ordered out and stood in the street for a few minutes, again under drawn revolvers. Then Koestler was marched off. I could do nothing.

"What is to happen to me?" I asked. "Am I to regard myself as a prisoner too? You are taking a big risk."

"I don't know yet."

"Well, I am not going to stand here waiting any longer. And I must have lunch. And my friend must be starving too. That at least you'll see to. Remember you'll hear more about all this."

"Hear from whom? And don't worry about that spy; we'll see to him all right," he retorted grimly.

There was nothing for it but a bolder face than I felt entitled to assume.

"Well, anyhow, I must have lunch; you too come with me. I'll pay."

He said, reflectively, that he wished lunch too, but that there was no question of payment. We got into the car again and drove back towards the Caleta. As we turned into the Caleta Palace entrance, I said cheerfully:—"Couldn't we get Tomas too?"

He scowled, and for a moment I thought he was going to hit me. It was an odd lunch. The hotel, almost empty when I had been there the Saturday before, to see off Gerda and Koestler, was now full. Officers pledging each other. Richly dressed priests, here and there an elderly Spaniard in black, clearly persons of distinction from the deference being paid them. But at last we got a table.

I tried to make cheerful conversation, but it was stiff work as the fat man was engrossed in his food and Bolin was not responsive to my questions about the years he spent in London as correspondent of "A.B.C.," the clubs he had visited, the restaurants he frequented, the press-men he knew.

Plainly he was worried and baffled. Something had gone wrong with his plans. As for me, I was in a curious psychological state; a kind of double personality, one getting more and more anxious as the atmosphere became more unpleasant, the other really enjoying the first good meal for many weeks, and interested in the development of the drama as if I were only a spectator.

The meal over, Bolin suddenly pulled himself together and said: "You stay here for the present. I am going to search your house."

"You are not going to search it unless I am with you, or you wait until there is some British official to be present.

"Very well; you may come."

He gave some directions to the fat man who went off, and we drove back in the car. As I got in I saw the driver, stiffening to attention from a dejected appearance, and suddenly remembering that he too must have been in the car since it came first to my house, said:

"That poor devil looks tired and hungry;

we ought to have given him food."

"He is all right; he is on duty."

No wonder, I thought, that Spanish working-classes, for the driver was a peasant or a mechanic, have no loyalty to their masters. On the Camino Nuevo the crowd of requetés was still there, as disorderly as ever, and I saw two or three more bundles lying huddled against the wall But we passed through without stopping.

At the steps of the villa, old Frasquita had run out from her cottage when she heard the car stopping, but when she saw that Bolin, his revolver again in evidence, was with me, she shrunk back behind the bougainvillea. Bolin unlocked the door, saying:

"Take me first to the room where Koestler was sleeping."

We went there and he opened every cupboard and drawer, looked under the mattresses, found nothing. He turned out the pockets and felt the lining of an overcoat. Nothing. He seized the small valise, little more than a dispatch case, and asked me whether Koestler had any more luggage. I said no.

Nothing in the luggage except a few cigarettes, a shirt, shaving things, and writing paper and envelopes, for the night before Koestler had torn up and destroyed the notes of what he had seen in Málaga, after Gerda had left.

Then we went down to my study, the revolver still in evidence, although twice I reminded him that I had no weapon. Under his direction I opened drawer after drawer in my writing desk and bureau.

Nothing unexpected in the rooms of a writer. But as one drawer was opened, with difficulty, for it stuck, two large metal cases were visible. Bolin's eyes glared.

"What is in these?"

"Not ammunition or dynamite. Only cigarettes. A stock I got from the British destroyer."

"The kind I smoke."

"Well, you will probably take them; and so I offer them to you."

Another flash of rage.

"I'll buy them from you."

But my eye caught a stout packet which long before I had hidden in the drawer. I took it out.

"Here, this will interest you, and I am very glad to hand it over."

I told him about the letters, written by the naval officers the night before their execution, and brought to me in the hope that some way of delivering could be found; that the letters had been got out to Gibraltar but that that packet was too bulky to be smuggled.

"Yes," he said gravely, "I'll take care of that."

I was almost sorry for him. But it would have been a misplaced emotion. I got not even a word or look of thanks. Then he glanced at my bookshelves, shying at some of the titles.

"You will find a mixed collection," I said, "Mercedes let me take all the prohibited propagandist books of your side from her husband's library in case they might cause trouble for them, and I have been collecting all those on the other side, as I hope to write a psychological study of this war."

"I have no time to finish the search now," he retorted. "I am going to send you to the Caleta Palace Hotel."

"I am a prisoner?"

"Consider yourself detained for the present."

"You saw what the Caleta Palace was like this afternoon," I said, "I am not going there unless you come with me and see that I have a proper room."

We reached the hotel. There were sentries at the gate, but the seats in the garden seemed shady and inviting on that hot afternoon.

"I must take things as they come," I said. "If I give you my word that I will be here when you come to-morrow, I suppose I may go out for a walk."

He pointed to the sentries.

"Certainly not."

"Anyhow, I may sit in the garden here?"

"Certainly not."

I said no more and we went indoors. He disappeared, saying he was going to see about my room. I remembered suddenly that even when at the last moment I was putting a few things into a bag to bring with me, he had stood over me, again revolver in his hand, watching every movement, and also that no one in Málaga except he and his rebel friends knew where I was.

Bolin came back, saying that he had got a comfortable room for me and that he would come for me in the morning. He left and, I also remembered, as I knew the hotel well, that an open low veranda lay along the shore with access from the cocktail bar.

I wrote a hurried note to Mr. Norton, former American consul, telling him only that I was detained in the Caleta Palace Hotel and that I should be grateful were he to come to see me. I went round to the cocktail bar. It was empty. Through it to the veranda. No one there.

Then I nearly made the mistake which according to the writers of "shockers" the amateur murderer is almost sure to make. I took out a hundred peseta note, but then remembering that so large a tip would excite suspicion I replaced it by three or four pesetas.

A possible messenger, a young lad passed by; I gave him the note and the money, told him where Mr. Norton's house was, and assured him that no answer was required. All he had to do was to put it in the letter-box or give it to a servant. He accepted the money eagerly and trotted off.

I went in through the closed cocktail bar; still no one there, back into the large lounge, which was full of people, selected a couple of novels from the shelves near the staircase, found an arm-chair, and settled down to read. The lounge also has glass doors opening on the veranda.

In a few minutes I went over to look, and found armed sentinels pacing up and down! Nothing for it but patience; I had done what was possible, and there was at least a good chance that it would be known where I was.

It was a dull, uneventful evening. The hotel was full of Spaniards and every now and again there were discussions in corners of the lounge between grave, elderly men and officers, but no one paid the slightest attention to me, and I tried to speak to no one. It was as if I were invisible. But I found that it was possible to have dinner and dined early and abundantly.

I finished two of the novels and took a third to my room which was well enough, but without towels, clean or soiled. Two sentries paced the corridor outside my door, and one of them followed me to the lavatory, in which, however I found a clean towel and carried it back as pleased as if it were a big prize in the lottery.

I slept well, rose early, shaved and washed in cold water, had coffee and milk in the dining-room which was nearly full of others similarly engaged. Then I went to the lounge, found the veranda open and took a chair into the brilliant sunlight and sat down to await events.

The sentries paced up and down in front, but so far as I was concerned, might have been deaf and dumb automata. No word had come from Norton and I wondered if my message had gone astray. Possibly, under strain, it was good to have some obsession; mine was that in the hurry of getting my things under Bolin's revolver, I had forgotten handkerchiefs and had only one clean one in my pocket.

Mr. and Mrs. Norton arrived at the hotel, about ten o'clock. They were very cordial and sympathetic. Norton told me that on his way to the hotel he had met the acting-British-consul, a Spanish interpreter and the commander of the destroyer *Basilisk* on which they had arrived from Gibraltar. He told them that I was imprisoned in the Caleta Palace Hotel and that he was going to see me.

They did not at once come to the Caleta Palace Hotel with or without bluejackets to take possession of a British subject who had been illegally detained by the rebels, but went to see the new rebel Civil Governor, on whom they had called immediately on their arrival.

The commander of the *Basilisk* probably knew nothing of the circumstances; the consul may have been influenced by the interpreter, an Anglo-Spanish business man who was a bitter supporter of the rebels and, afterwards, was so rude to me that one of the officers of the *Basilisk* congratulated me on the way in which I kept my temper.

Anyhow, they came to the hotel about an hour later and told me that there was

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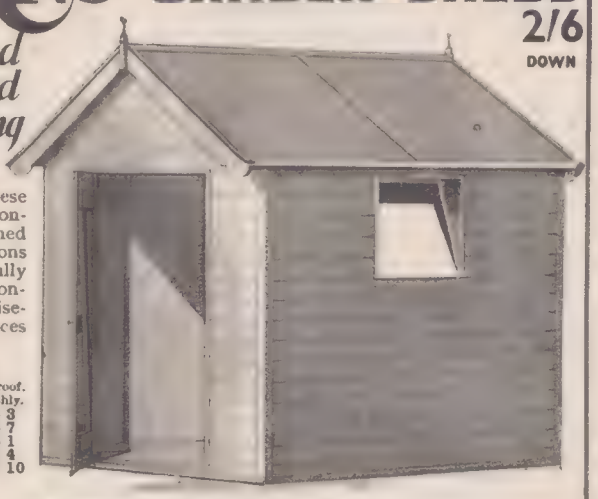

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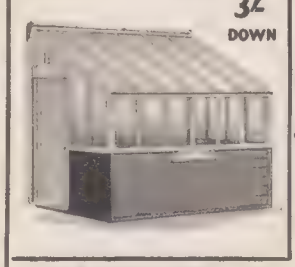

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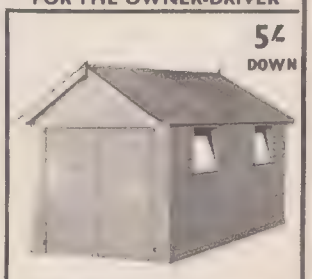

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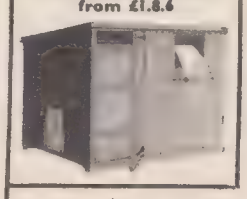

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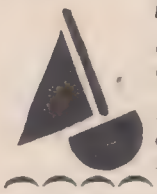

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not a moment to lose; unless I came to the destroyer with them at once, they could not answer for my life. The staff officers had been extremely bitter against me, but neither then nor since could I ascertain what charges of breach of neutrality had been made against me. And indeed none could lie.

Finding the staff obdurate and venomous, they had gone to the Civil Governor, the Duque de Sevilla with whom they had already made friends and, had found him "more reasonable." But they had undertaken on my behalf that I should sign some sort of promise, chiefly not to return to Spain without permission from the military authorities and not say anything about the circumstances of my "detention."

I asked about Koestler; they could do nothing for him; he was not a British subject. As for me, there was not a moment to lose, I must come at once.

It is easy to be wise after the event, but I am sure now that I ought to have refused and insisted on complete protection, without terms, from the British representatives. But they were very impressive.

They had accepted the terms on my behalf, and unless I came away at once they could do nothing for me. The truth was, I suppose, that the interpreter had conducted the negotiations in the full belief that anyone who had shown sympathy with the Spanish Government was a dangerous criminal, only too lucky to escape a deserved fate.

The British acting-consul was more deferential to the Rebel authorities than he had been to the former Civil Governor and, no doubt, whether acting under directions from London or Gibraltar, was anxious, above all things, to avoid an "incident." And quite certainly and genuinely, for he always was full of personal kindness to me, he was anxious to get me safely out of trouble.

So I went meekly with them, first getting a promise from Clissold that he would communicate with Major Bolin, explain why I had left the Caleta, and be present during the search of my villa.

Afterwards I heard from a solitary neutral correspondent who had contrived to get in with the rebels, but had to leave hurriedly when discovered to be "neutral" and not strongly pro-Franco, that from the Wednesday onwards, casual shooting was replaced by court-martials and civil courts, but that girls were shot because they had acted as typists to the committees, civilians who had held any official post were condemned to death and, under the pretext that they were mutineers because they had taken the side of the legitimate Government, civil guards, militia or other defenders of their country, suffered the extreme military penalty.

After a comfortable night in the ship, the commander having given me his own cabin, I rose to another lovely morning with more circling aeroplanes. Clissold went ashore about ten to meet Bolin and be present at the search of my villa. I begged to go with him, but again he told me that it was quite impossible, that now I was aboard I must stay aboard.

I finished giving an exact account of my last two days in Málaga which the commander required for his official report to the Admiralty at Gibraltar. He made no comment on it, but I felt a change in his manner from friendliness to complete sympathy.

Clissold returned about noon, bringing two valises for me. Were there any handkerchiefs? Yes. So far so good. Was there any news about Arthur Koestler? No, except that he was probably still alive.

Turning out the contents of a cupboard in my dressing-room, Bolin had pounced on a hypodermic syringe and said he wanted that, as he had found a duplicate on Koestler. Clissold then told me that Bolin had gone through the villa room by room and had found nothing suspicious, but had taken the whole of my manuscripts and papers, promising the consul to return them after examination in detail.

The commander then told us that the destroyer was to set out for Gibraltar almost at once. The Anglo-Spanish interpreter then said that I must sign the promise they had undertaken to get from me before we left Málaga. It was stiffer in words than I had understood, but it was too late. I had lost my chance of refusing and I signed.

We arrived in Gibraltar about four o'clock and in a few minutes I was in the Bristol Hotel.

And I have since been in the high Pyrenees, heard the thunder of the guns across in Aragon a few miles away, and saw a slightly straying German or Italian tri-motor bomber, I have not gone back to Spain with or without the written permission of the military authorities, although I for one, recognise only one authority in Spain, that of the legitimate Spanish Government.

The British consul wrote to tell me that a few days after I left, the doors of my garage were broken open, and the car stolen. He had reported the theft to the Civil Governor but that was the end of it.

It was the car which, although the garage doors were open, the anarchists had refused to take in their urgent need for the evacuation of their wounded hospital patients, without my personal permission. The consul also told me that Bolin had failed to return my papers.

I consulted a high legal authority who told me that a promise given under threats or compulsion had no binding force. I consulted a high diplomatic authority. He told me that the British consul had no right to give such an undertaking on behalf of a British subject without a statement of the charges against him and opportunity for inquiry into them.

I went to the Foreign Office, and ultimately saw the highest authorities here, and told them the facts, which indeed could have been at their disposal from the Admiralty and the Governor at Gibraltar. They were polite, even sympathetic, but gave me no more satisfaction than to say that they would try to get back my papers for me. Nothing followed, although since then Major Luis Bolin who took them, and promised to return them, has been in London at least once, interviewing journalists and his private agents, to be presumed, with the authority of the Passport Office, a branch of the Foreign office.

Moreover, there is no secret I can now give away. From my knowledge of them, I do not for a moment think that the Bolins have anything but a clear conscience with regard to me. They will remember now that whilst they were with me I never disguised on which side my sympathies were, and doubtless they have inoculated their relations, including Luis and friends with the conception of me as a highly dangerous person. But in the meantime, my account of them in Málaga was published in my own book early in January.

Since then Arthur Koestler, who was exchanged and released after his long prison experience, has published the story of the last days in Málaga. No doubt in minor details his memory and mine may not always coincide; but they are minor details, on which the truth of the record does not depend.

General Franco and his agents have regarded impartiality almost as a crime, and have known it to be an extreme danger. But they had a stronger case against me as they knew my sympathies to be against them. They had failed to find such armed resistance, or the threat of it, in my house as would have justified shooting us out of hand. They had failed in getting me secretly into their power, and they did the next best thing; to try to ensure my silence.

They have succeeded. For many months, and quite apart from any juridical casuistry ('casuistry' in its proper meaning) about a promise given under compulsion, I have been reluctant to write this story. But a man who is within a few days of his seventy-third birthday ought to be a man in a hurry, if he thinks that he has anything worth putting on record. I do think that what I have to tell ought to be recorded.

After thinking over the causes of the Revolution I wish to be precise in my accusation of the part played in this war by the British Government. Personally, I believe that the policy of Republic as expressed in the Constitution it formulated, even if in course of time with the consent of the people it had moved much further to the Left, would have been a great contribution to the happiness of Spain and to the peace and progress of the world.

Also, I believe that the policies of Germany, Italy and Japan, the three great Fascist powers, even if by the will of the Dictators they become modified so as to be directed more to prosperity at home than aggression abroad, are a menace to the future of civilisation.

I accept that probably a majority of the more prosperous people in Great Britain, and certainly a large majority of the Conservative Party view, with horror and dismay, that trend to the Left in ideology and practice which fills me with hope and rejoicing. Be it so.

There is abundant scope for argument and debate, and as men are far from being wholly rational, the argument and debate may well reach a bitterness that makes co-operation difficult, or even temporarily impossible. But to try to regain by armed rebellion an advantage that you have lost, probably, temporarily, at the polls, is a crime against humanity.

A policy that proposes to clear the ring for a fight between democracy and criminals, even if the clearing is honest and impartial, is a crime, an unabashed acceptance of the Fascist creed. Great Britain has been the leader in that crime, and the least we who are ashamed of our country's behaviour can do, is to declare our abhorrence. I personally repent of my year's silence.

Still, to return to my last three days in Gibraltar. I wrote my name in the book at Government House, sent a message to the admiral tendering thanks for the kindness I had received from the commander and officers of the *Basilisk*, and had a cordial, but rather formal interview with my old friend, the Colonial Secretary.

The town was on fête because of a visit from the German admiral in command of the Mediterranean fleet, on his flagship.

Two odd warnings were given me not on any account to go out alone after dark. One was from an old friend, all of whose instincts were against democracy. He told me that I was a "Blasted old anarchist and deserved hanging; but he intended to reserve that privilege for himself, and in the meantime, he and his car were at my service."

When I was in the hotel bedroom, a tap came at the door, and a Spaniard of the working classes came in, looked anxiously all round to see if I were alone, and then said, "Don Pedro, we know all about what you have done in Málaga. I am sent to thank you, and to tell you to be very careful here; Franco's people will be searching for you and Gibraltar is dark at nights."

Gibraltar was relatively empty, so far as the hotels went. Most of the Spanish refugees had gone back to Spain, but I heard that some of them, including the other Bolins, were coming to Gibraltar in a day or two on their way back to Málaga. Some of the British residents in Málaga had left already for other countries; others told me of their intention to go back to Málaga at once, "now that all was over."

Two or three of them were charming to me, one of the nicest reproaching me in the kindest manner, for having the terrible opinions I was supposed to have, saying that if I knew what she did about the Reds so "nice a person as I was, could not possibly sympathise with them." But she had been in Gibraltar all the time!

I finished my packing, but slept little that night, In the morning, standing on the deck of the *Narkunda* I saw the wide anchorage between Gibraltar and Algeciras full of craft of all kinds flying the Rebel flag, the Admiralty harbour under the shadow of the Rock, looking small and helpless against air-craft, saw where the Fascist heights dominated the Straits, and watched a procession of transports and armed trawlers crossing from Spanish Morocco. I wondered.

Are the hearts of men desperately wicked? We do not know; Free Will can exist only in freedom, and in modern society only one person in a million has the good fortune to achieve freedom.

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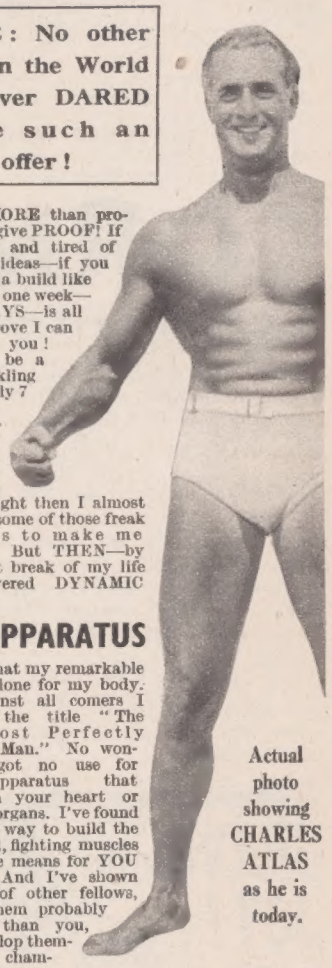

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They might believe in men in Two Dance but was there a banker in town who would lend him money just because two years of burnt off crops had left him broke, with a horse, two cows, three children and a wife?

A dry farmer in a cattle country he couldn't even argue—had he been given the power of trying to prove his case—that he had a chance of getting things right again.

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And now he was riding up the ghats to meet the man who had sentenced her "to the beach." And if that isn't the stuff that makes great short stories you have not yet learned of the art of Kenneth Perkins when he writes such a piece as "The Echo of Maggie Tom."

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FROM what you've been telling us during the last few weeks, it would seem that there is still more difference of opinion about the histrionic art and the surroundings in which it is languishing, than about any other topic under the neon signs, except perhaps communism, Hitler's home life and the profound meditations of a motor-car salesman who has been made to walk home.

In fact, we have been treated to a spectacular series of discourses on the art of Mary Pickford, the divine impetus that makes a classical actress bounce about the stage like a ballerina full of gin, and all the sordid details lying behind the grease-paint coyness of most distinguished glamour girls, merely because we tried to find out what it is that makes some plays successful and throws others into the ash-can.

Yet it is so long since we shot craps in theatre alleys waiting for Romeo to prove for the umpteenth time that he was the world's most overrated lover that we can understand only the outcry of Miss G. Cochrane Sharks, of Bayswater, London, W.2, who believes that theatregoers, especially those in the gallery, are having as hard a time as the theatre itself. For we never did feel comfortable on a bench.

Having unburdened herself on the second oldest subject, saying that when a penny was taken off the entertainment tax on gallery seats the theatre legends were changed from "seats 1s. 3d., entertainment tax 3d." to "seats 1s. 4d., entertainment tax 2d."—she adds, "of course, we just love queueing up in the cold and wet in order to get stools in order to get seats.

"When, eventually, we are allowed to climb to the gallery, we must perch on a board about six inches across and with so little room between the seats that our knees dig into the neck of the person in front. Isn't it enough that we have to see the play at an angle of 45 degrees without having one's extremities punished as well?

"Then there is the programme. You are charged threepence for this marvellous little document, which would be expensive at a penny, considering it is three-parts full of advertisements of all that can be bought at the bar. Gallery-goers, crouching on the bare mountainside, never see the lovely streams that flow from the bar into the fertile valleys of the stalls and dress circles. In fact, gallery-goers must love the theatre to storm the citadel, despite the efforts of grasping theatrical managers."

Never having had our face smacked by an actress in search of publicity, or been refused permission to sit among the stuffed shirts in the stalls of any theatre, we can't see that anything we might say will do any good. It's just one of those things. It's the same with the constabulary.

You just can't do anything about it, even though Miss E. Barrett, of Catford, S.E.3, is getting decidedly anxious because she finds that, instead of chubby red-faced, portly policemen of all our yesterdays, we are confronted with slim, well-groomed

men with faces like Robert Taylor and figures like Johnny Weissmuller.

"How difficult it is," she says, "to be told by the pleasant young fellow you have just met at a dance that he is a policemen when not working, after you've boasted of passing a red light at more than forty.

"When mothers threaten tiny daughters with a policeman now, the young maiden peeps over the top of her parambulator and, with an eye on the local cop, says: 'That would be just too cute.' I don't wonder that straying film stars find our bobbies too, too wonderful. Why d'you think I spend my week-ends getting lost?"

Meanwhile, Mr. A. Heydon, of Walsall, Staffs, wishes to defend the gendarmerie and prove that chivalry still exists in Birmingham. A woman, seeing a handkerchief on the pavement and another woman disappearing into the distance, jumped to a hasty conclusion and called a policeman—a Birmingham policeman, mind you—who left his point at a Belisha crossing, picked up the handkerchief and followed the woman, says Mr. Heydon. "When she boarded a bus, he jumped on another bus going in the same direction, waited till he caught up the first bus at the traffic lights, jumped off and ran forward to the other bus to restore the lost crepe-de-chine, with all the gallantry of an Elizabethan courtier."

You'll realise how we feel about all this when we say the kind of cop we like is the bloke who, according to an American friend, chided a man for leaning against the wall of a bank.

"And what do you think you are doing?" he asked. "Propping up the bank? Come on, step on it!" So the man walked away and the bank collapsed on the cop. We're telling you!

For Your Amusement

CLUES ACROSS

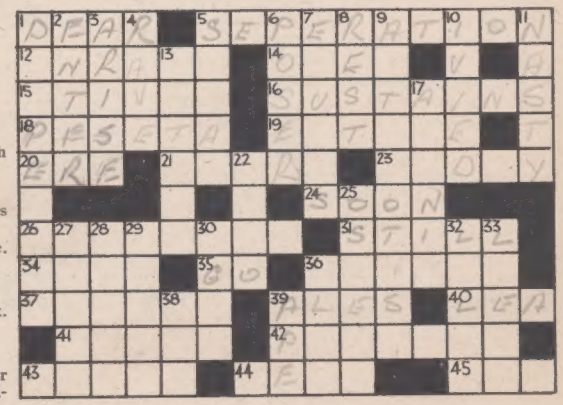
1. Affectionate word in one sense.
5. State of being apart.
12. Transported with delight.
14. Indication of future event.
15. Not a great amount of wealth.
16. Bears or maintains.
18. Sea pet acquires purchasing value.
19. May be your possessions.
20. Sooner than.
21. To be this is to be informed.
23. Devout no doubt.
24. At no distant date.
26. Given for counter-effect.
31. Lacking movement.
34. To arrive at judgment.
35. Get thee hence in other words.
36. One who travels smoothly.
37. Decorated.
39. These are brewed.
40. Maybe meadow or pasture.
41. This is the fashion.
42. Net pair (anagram).
43. Maintained as true.
44. Worked glass.
45. Club for wheelers in brief.

CLUES DOWN

1. A reckless fellow.
2. Pass inside.
3. To get up would be much the same.
4. Talk irrationally.
5. Last one may have serious consequences.
6. One who takes an attitude.
7. Provides entertainment.
8. All the others.
9. He must have an opponent.
10. Covered with creeper.
11. Unclean.
13. To be hoisted with your own, is not usually anticipated.
17. Reparation made.
22. This is plain in the altogether (hidden)
25. They reduce friction.
27. Necessary for sensation.
28. Joiner's device for joint.
29. A representation.
30. Wave-like moulding.
32. A memento, perhaps sacred.
33. Midland river.
36. Perhaps between the Bens.
38. Exclamation usually doubled.
39. Imitate.

EPHEMERAL ARID
LAUREL PAPER
ERRATIC E PAR
CESSATION RELIC
T TELEGRAM TIE
MD AIM VISAS
TAB DROOP TENT
AROUSE NURSE TO
STARING ROUSER
TIRADE NEVE AE
ENDLESS DESIRED

Solution to last week's puzzle



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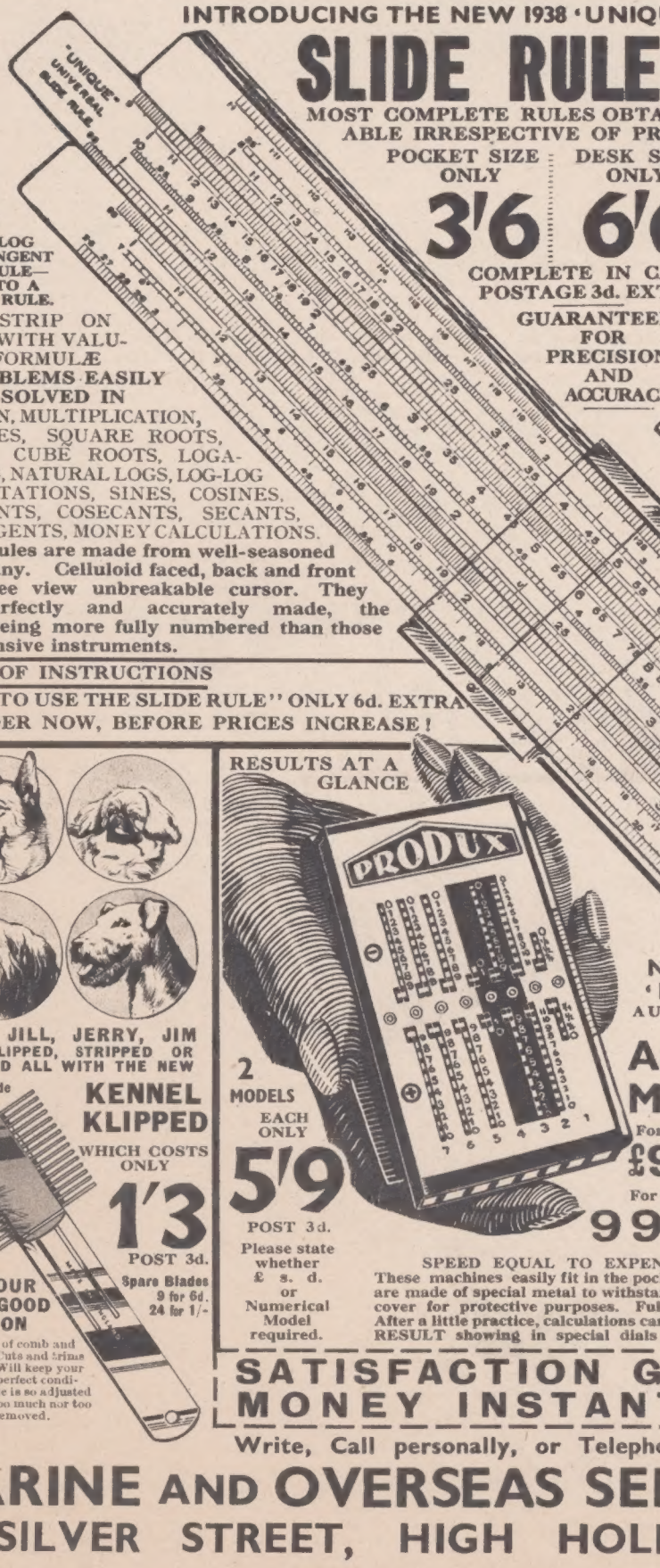

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